

Childhood Education

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Religion As An
Important Resource

JOURNAL OF THE ASSOCIATION FOR CHILDHOOD EDUCATION

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Childhood Education

*The Magazine for Teachers of Young Children
To Stimulate Thinking Rather Than Advocate Fixed Practice*

Volume 18

Number 6

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FRANCES MAYFARTH, *Editor*

Subscription price \$2.50. A.C.E. membership and subscription \$4.00. Foreign postage 50 cents. Single copies 30 cents. Send orders and subscriptions to 1201 Sixteenth Street, N.W., Washington, D.C. . . . Entered as second class matter at the post office at Washington, D. C., under the act of March 3, 1879. Copyright, 1941, Association for Childhood Education, Washington, D. C. Published with cooperation of National Association for Nursery Education.

Published monthly September through May by

ASSOCIATION FOR CHILDHOOD EDUCATION, 1201—16th ST. N.W., WASHINGTON, D. C.

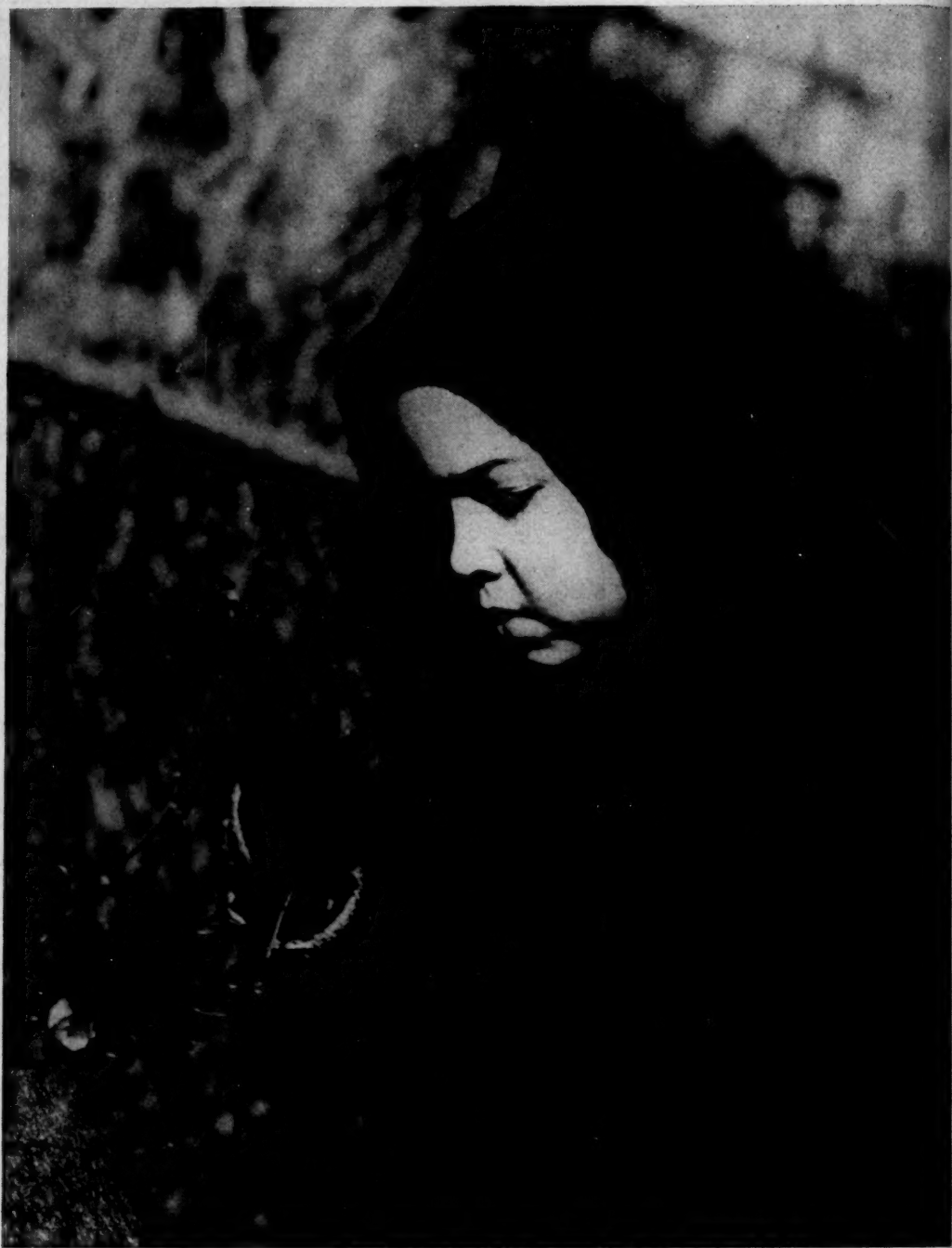
Next Month

• Health and recreation will receive particular emphasis in the March issue. N. P. Neilson, Executive Secretary of the Department of Health, Physical Education and Recreation of the NEA, has prepared an editorial on the theme, "Health as an Important Resource." Julia Wade Abbot, Supervisor of Kindergartens, Philadelphia, describes healthful attitudes toward health on the part of both teachers and children; Catherine Read of the Ford Republics discusses organized recreation and family living, and Alfhild Axelson describes the health program at Lincoln School, New York City.

Jeanne Barnes of the National Recreation Association describes health programs for children in institutions; Edna Gerken, health programs with Indian children, and Edward Miller, Friends Service Committee, describes teacher experiences in summer work camps.

Three reviews of recent books on health and physical education prepared by Hazel Cubberley, University of California at Los Angeles, complete the health emphasis.

EXTRA COPIES—Orders for reprints from this issue must be received by the Law Reporter Printing Company, Washington, D. C., by the tenth of the month of issue.



Photograph contributed by Margaret Hampel, Ohio University, Athens

Not a whisper tells
Where our small seed dwells
Nor is known the moment green
When our tip shall appear.

We thread the earth in silence,
In silence we build our bowers,
And leaf by leaf in silence show
Till we laugh atop, sweet flowers.

—Leigh Hunt

Faith As A Need Of Life

WHENEVER a people feel themselves deeply insecure, sorely baffled by long-continued and widespread troubles and problems, their souls will reach out in searching. They seek renewed bases of faith. Partly of necessity, partly of choice, they turn from the "material" to the "spiritual," from the temporary to the more abiding, from the pleasure seeking to a yearning for security. Having long felt torn within, they seek—in older words—a healing, an at-one-ment, or—in modern phrase—inner security.

They thus look about for deeper insight, for an inclusive cause to embrace, for such an understanding of the totality of things that they can work in cooperation with it. In a word, they seek a faith which by giving them a total program of action can restore to them the sense of inner security with intent to win, now so lacking amid strife and distress.

This sense of spiritual stress will for many be a new experience. For those, it will prove easy to go astray. Many of them will accept what cannot really satisfy, what cannot successfully answer to the demands and strains of current life and thought.

This possibility of mistaken and misleading faith demands serious consideration. The problem of finding inner security is of course old, as old on earth as serious trouble and disappointment. But any solution in order to satisfy our day and time must, in a true sense, be new and modern; it must be fashioned exactly to meet our now felt needs. No solution can finally satisfy us which does not take adequate account of our peculiar modern doubts and questions. In fact, it is precisely these new and modern difficulties which mainly constitute our current problems. Not to face these new difficulties squarely and honestly is but cowardly and immoral. So to act is to deceive ourselves and mislead those who trust us and to prepare for greater troubles when our evasion shall later become clear.

THERE is yet further danger. Finding a faith is personal in that whatever one so accepts becomes, by that act, his inner security; and it so remains as long as he can so accept it. Merely to be accepted as a faith brings then, at least for the time being, internal unity and soul content. The way thus lies open for plausible panaceas, new or old, to deceive. Whoever accepts such a panacea will forthwith bear testimony—and honestly—to the internal release he has thus now got. In this way the deceptive panacea can become a cult, and particularly so in times of public stress; for the greater the public stress, the readier do the unwary accept what they hear extolled, be it a new plausible or an old and outworn dogma. In order to abide, however, a faith must meet life's real needs faced honestly and without evasion.

When it is intimated, as above, that such words as faith, spirituality, or religion need new content in order to satisfy, many get troubled. These

hesitate to question the hallowed terms they learned in childhood. The opposite position is here taken. Only through honest inquiry can one come to real belief, for blind acceptance of mere words is but mental idolatry. As children we inevitably got inadequate ideas of what we heard from our elders, even where conscious indoctrination did not prevail. Not then to review, with sincere inquiry, our childhood notions is in effect to remain always children; while to remain satisfied with less insight than we might have is simply immoral. We must study if we are to be true either to our souls or to truth.

SINCE our world develops novelly, it seems inevitable that no specific solution to the all-inclusive problem can last permanently. History will bring new demands. Men do feel new difficulties.

Must we then despair? Is faith impossible to man? No, but it may well be that the lasting faith lies not in any doctrines as conclusions already reached, but rather in some method of seeking. For in a changing world method may outlast conclusion and especially so if it can criticize itself.

Do we have such a promising method of seeking? Yes, it increasingly so appears. The most reliable process known to man for getting knowledge—with the most reliable resulting knowledge—is the method of experimental inquiry. In this method we test any idea by whether the observed outcome fits what the idea had foretold. It is this which best tells us what to believe.

But this sounds intellectualistic. Can it serve also the spiritual needs of life? The method may sound intellectualistic; that is merely its form, the way of stating it. Its content can and must contemplate the whole known content of human experience, and the spiritual is one part or aspect of this content.

And what about religion? Dr. George A. Coe taught us that religion is not to be defined by its content but by its attitude. Religion is present in the degree that man has accepted an inclusive outlook really to live by it.

But does not modern man increasingly reject religion?

Yes and no. It appears yes, since most have confused religion with theology. The one, however, is but yesterday's content of the other, made in pre-scientific times and now no longer acceptable. The true answer to the question is no, since so long as man is man, men will seek—and find—inner security in losing themselves in a cause worthy of their every effort.

Can such a cause show an abiding content? Abiding content, no; abiding aim, yes. Already we have seen honest searching as one lasting element in such a cause, since method thus can criticize itself and therein abide. Another element is regard for humanity, to work for the welfare of men everywhere on the bases of justice, world order, and peace. Both specific contents will ever change as we continually grow in insight, but each as an end will abide forever. There can be no better aim, or more lasting one, than to lose oneself in searching out and serving the common good.—*William H. Kilpatrick.*

Religion in the Public Schools

... VALUES AT STAKE

Mrs. Fahs, Editor of Children's Materials for the American Unitarian Association, Boston, Massachusetts, believes that a new kind of religious education is needed for the children of our country and that it might become a part of public education. She discusses five principles which should govern the planning and executing of such a program, describes illustrative procedures, and outlines four steps which school authorities might take in preparation for such a possible experiment in religious education as a part of the total program in our schools.

IN MOST COMMUNITIES when the decision has once been made to set up a program of religious education in connection with the public schools, the responsibility for planning and for carrying out those programs has been left largely to the representatives of the various types of religious institutions existent within the city. Where school superintendents have carried any of the responsibility, it has consisted, for the most part, of little more than a checking of attendance or the requiring of certain minimum standards of scholarship. But there would seem to be a growing realization on the part of school superintendents that they should not so completely relinquish responsibility for such an important part of the educational program.

Editor's Note: This article is from an address given by Mrs. Fahs March 27, 1941, at the Annual Schoolmen's Week, University of Pennsylvania. This address was first published in the Twenty-eighth Annual Schoolmen's Week Proceedings and has been revised by the author for Childhood Education.

There would appear to be a realization, also, that a new kind of religious education is needed under the conditions that public education creates and that even religious leaders lack experience in this type of education. As a result there is a growing apprehension that the consequences of a hands-off policy on the part of public school men and women may prove to be serious.

If, however, the people of this country really desire to have religious education reckoned with in the programs of the public schools we cannot hold back the movement merely by saying that nobody knows how to meet the serious problems involved or that the situations are too full of dynamite to touch.

But what is this new way that must be learned? And is it possible to achieve it?

In order that we may share a common understanding of the term, "religious education," as it will be used in this article, let it be stated that by "religion" is meant something more than is usually conveyed by the terms ethics or morality, and yet a belief in a personal god is not necessarily involved. One's religion, growing from small beginnings, is one's actual philosophy of life seen in the perspective of the greater whole of which one feels himself a part. If real it brings a dynamic quality—certain over-tones, certain basic illuminations—into the personal life. Even in the public schools, religion should not be taught as a mere intellectual exercise. It is too warm with reality and too needful to

satisfying living to be handled simply as an academic discipline, unrelated to everyday experiences. A program of religious education within the curricula of our schools should represent an organized effort to encourage and to guide children in building for themselves such personal foundations for worthy living, such supporting philosophies of life as will enhance courage and strengthen high-minded endeavor.

Guiding Principles

Having made this rather vague but it is hoped suggestive definition of what is meant by "religious education," let us examine the principles which should govern the planning and executing of such programs of religious education within the framework of public education.

First of all, the *principles of religious freedom* should be maintained; but this freedom should be *for the children themselves* rather than merely for the parents or ecclesiastical institutions interested in propagating their particular types of religion. To give parents freedom to decide into which traditional religious culture their children are to be indoctrinated is one thing. To make it possible for all children to become sufficiently intelligent regarding the issues at stake to decide for themselves how and what they shall believe is something else. For Roman Catholic parents to be given the freedom to determine that their children shall be taught the Catholic faith, and for Protestant parents to be permitted to have their children exposed to Protestant Christianity, and for Jewish parents to be free to teach their children the special tenets Judaism represents, is, to be sure, the sort of religious freedom the makers of our constitution envisioned; but to propose a program of religious education on released time related to our public school system today along such narrowing lines is not consistent with what should be

our modern religious liberty. Nor will such ways of religious education meet the very great need that we have in our modern world for religious tolerance, mutual understanding, and respect.

We should not for a moment sanction, in the teaching of the social sciences, a plan permitting Republican parents to teach a Republican philosophy of citizenship during school hours to their own children; and Democratic parents, a Democratic philosophy to their children; and Socialist parents, a Socialistic philosophy of citizenship to their children. Public educators, in spite of the recent protests of an alarmist group, are standing by the proposition that in the field of social studies both the failures and the successes of our governmental and economic systems must be examined with fairness from all important angles so that children may become intelligent regarding the real needs for improvement in our society, and regarding the various means proposed to bring those improvements about. A similar objectivity and breadth of vision should be manifested in any efforts to teach religion in connection with our public schools. If parents insist on having their children receive religious instruction in connection with our public school system, schoolmen and women should insist with equal vigor on the children's freedom in the process.

In the second place, even though we should uphold the principle of religious freedom for the children, the *beliefs which the children do make their own should harmonize with the rest of their discoveries regarding life and the universe*. We should ask ourselves this question: "Does religion as the children personally appropriate it, contradict the findings which their study of science has brought them?" Public school teachers, for example, should not abrogate their responsibility to fight such teachings as the Scopes trial represented in

the last generation. Religion cannot wholesomely become a side issue or something held in a compartment separate from the rest of education. Whatever the faiths may be which the younger generation may create for themselves, these faiths should *seem to the children* to harmonize with the total picture of the universe brought to them by the rest of their education. Religion, to be wholesome, needs to be a fitting over-belief that encompasses the best that one has already learned. It should be a philosophy that unifies the child's outlook rather than one that divides life into walled channels. Although we should learn to respect the beliefs of others through understanding how these beliefs have come to be, and why they are now held, yet, at the same time, we must remember that to leave children with a mediaeval religion in a scientific age is like teaching them to walk with crutches when they are yearning to run on their own feet.

Adults, of course, will differ among themselves regarding which religious beliefs do not contradict the findings of the sciences. This, however, should not blind us to our educational responsibility to impress upon children and young people the importance of building upon the very best that they know, and the sin of belittling sound knowledge, even for the sake of holding to a faith. We can rest assured that the deeper the scientists delve, the greater the mysteries grow. The spirit of scientific investigation which gives zest to the life of our public schools today is too high a value to be lost, even for the sake of religion. The process in religious education should, therefore, be from the very beginning one of open and honest seeking for the truth, so that the resulting faith, whatever it may be, will be a natural and integrating over-belief inclusive of the children's best and largest understandings.

A third principle, which should characterize any public programs of religious education, concerns the relation between the beliefs which the children come to have and their emotional health. The question should be continually asked, "*Do the beliefs which the children are making their own contribute to their emotional well-being?* Or do those beliefs deepen morbid fears, develop enervating feelings of inadequacy, or encourage escape from reality? Educators for some time now have stood for the physical well-being of children as more important than the mastery of subject matter. They should be equally concerned with the emotional or psychic well-being of children.

That some forms of religious belief are emotionally unwholesome we should probably all agree. A more objective study should be made by psychologists and educators than has as yet been made of the emotional concomitants of certain kinds of belief. Even though we hold to the principle of giving to each child freedom to choose those beliefs that seem good to him, yet educators should not take a *laissez faire* attitude toward types of faith which increase emotional difficulties even though adult elements in the community may be naively fostering those beliefs.

Even at the risk of being accused of dogmatism, let me illustrate this point by describing certain beliefs which, if really incorporated into a child's working philosophy of life, may be regarded as emotionally harmful.

A belief in a God whose attitudes toward mankind are similar to those which, in the light of our modern education in parenthood, we now regard as harmful when manifested by parents toward their children. I refer to a belief in a God who becomes angry and punishes as does an inconsistent and maladjusted parent; or one who has chosen favorites and is partial in his dealings with his creatures; or a God who withholds his love from those who displease him

and grants his love only to those who are good; or a God who holds over mankind a threat of distant punishment that seems unjustly severe, leaving men with a vaguely felt fear of the unknown. If a concept of a personal God is to be emotionally wholesome, the values imputed to that god-personality must not be on a lower level than the better standards of character represented in our own generation.

A belief in a universe that is chaotic and without reason or essential unity. Whether this belief be couched in theistic or non-theistic terms, it would not support a child's needed sense of at-homeness in the midst of a puzzling and, even at times, a baffling existence.

Any belief regarding life's ultimate issues held so dogmatically that, as a result, society becomes divided into warring groups characterized by intergroup prejudice and scorn.

On the other hand, there are religious beliefs which seem to make the heart strong, to enhance courage, to promote originality and self-respect, and to lead towards widening sympathies and understandings. Beliefs such as the following would appear to qualify:

A belief in a God whose attitude toward humanity is reliable, stable, and understanding, regardless of whether individuals are evil or good; or, if a non-theistic form of this belief were to seem preferable, a trust in a universe that by its very nature undergirds the pursuit of truth and righteousness.

A belief in a fundamental kinship with all mankind and a consequent sense of common responsibility for the good of all. If couched in theistic terms, a belief in a universal God and in the brotherhood of man.

Whether it has been wise or foolish to have attempted to state so briefly and categorically contrasting beliefs that may be regarded as either wholesome or unwholesome from the point of view of emotional health, the thought whose expression is attempted should not be lost sight of. The principle to be remembered is *that the psychic health of our children should be regarded as of primary importance*. School administrators and teachers who may have charge of programs of

religious education should work hand in hand with the mental hygienists. Teachers should not be afraid to study objectively the emotional problems involved in religious education. They should ascertain what sorts of beliefs are likely to prove to be unwholesome and why such beliefs may yet appeal to certain children. In short, the programs of religious education should constantly be appraised from the standpoint of the emotional health of the children.

A fourth principle which should prevail in any religious education related to public education is that *the methods used in such programs of religious education should encourage a process of open, frank and unembarrassed exploration of religious possibilities* in the presence of teachers who are able to be objective and who are equipped to enrich and guide the processes of discovery. Such teaching should not follow the usual method of emotional persuasion on the part of the teacher, combined with an expected acceptance on the part of the child. A religious education suitable to our public schools should not deal with religion as a revelation whose authority cannot be tested on reasonable grounds. Instead, religion should be approached as mankind's search for understanding and for satisfying ideals and faith. Such an approach to a study of religion will seem to some to be quite unsatisfactory, unappreciative, and futile. Unquestionably, it is an approach which few teachers of religion have dared to use. Most of those at present working in the churches and synagogues of the country would be baffled as to how to begin teaching in this manner. Yet surely no subject which cannot be so handled is an appropriate subject to add to our public school curriculum.

A fifth principle which is involved in any religious education appropriate to our public education is that *in comparing dif-*

ferent religious beliefs, customs and ideals, both those factors which are universal and those which are variant should be discovered and appreciated by the children. Just as the psychologists have taught us to regard outward behavior merely as the symptom, while the inner yearnings and compulsions constitute the motive power which determines the expression, so should we teach children to look at differing religions. Beliefs, customs, and patterns of life are the outward symbols of certain universal yearnings for protection from tragedy, for comfort in the face of the elements, for strength and health, for power and social fellowship; in short, yearnings for those things that have somehow meant happiness and the good life.

The ancient words of Confucius still bring us a challenge:

Religions are many and different, but reason is one. The broad-minded see the truth in different religions; the narrow-minded see only the differences.

In a religious education connected with our school system, teachers surely should seek to develop individuals of this broad-minded type who will dig deep into life's meanings to see the truth back of the differences in the religions of mankind. Yet these differences should not be evaded or forgotten. Only when they are understood will the universals be appreciated. Such mutual appreciations and understandings are essential to peace in a world community knit together as humanity increasingly is knit today.

Illustrative Procedures

A few illustrations of the procedures that would be involved in such a teaching of religion may illuminate the issues. For example, the way of exploration and discovery means granting children at an early age many opportunities to see for themselves the nature of the universe in

which they live. Bertha Stevens in her new book entitled *How Miracles Abound* suggests many ways by which eight-year-olds may be led to find in such common things as salt crystals or dew drops, in lima beans or trees hints regarding the harmony and beauty, rhythm and orderliness, unity and creativity found everywhere in the universe. "The part is like the whole and helps to reveal it."¹ Children may gain their first glimpses into the wonderfulness of life through watching baby kittens, or birds learning to fly, or butterflies bursting their cocoons, or chickens picking their way out into the light. Children may be encouraged to feel the blessedness of the air they breathe, in and out, second by second; and the marvel of the sunlight that travels from millions of light years away and yet penetrates with its life-giving energy into every hidden cell in our bodies. Children may be awakened to the wonder of the water we drink, clear as crystal, yet millions of years old; having the strength of ten thousand giants, yet gentle enough to form a baby's cradle. Such experiences though not at first linked with religious terminologies are important steps toward the achievement of large and spiritually valuable thoughts of God.

When in the higher elementary grades teachers deal with such religious traditions as are contained in the English Bible, or with other phases of the stirring history of man's religious quest, the way of exploration means entering imaginatively into the real experiences of the men of the past. They should be envisioned by the children as men of like passions as themselves, facing the same universe that we today face, but with differing understandings.

Comparisons and contrasts should be openly made. For example, instead of teaching children that God is the creator

¹ *How Miracles Abound*. By Bertha Stevens. Boston: The Beacon Press, 1941. p. 9.

of the world and telling them one particular story of how that creation was accomplished, teachers may better begin with children's own wonderings about how things began, and how they themselves came to be. From these personal questions teachers may lead on to the stories which peoples of different times and lands have told of the beginnings of the earth and sky and of life and death—stories from Greece, Palestine, Japan, China, Africa, and from various American Indian tribes. These differing stories should be compared forthrightly with the latest findings of our modern scientists. Children will then be able to sense for themselves the significance of this great question about beginnings, why men have asked it, and how they came to feel the presence of an invisible creative power active from the beginning and active continuously in all life and throughout the cosmos. Whatever beliefs they may eventually hold about a creator, the children will realize that in such explorations they have been having fellowship with the peoples of the ages.

So again in dealing with prayer. Instead of teaching children prayers to say, we may tell them what experiences have led mankind, even as far back as the cave dwelling days, to sense the presence of some invisible reality around about them and within them, and how they tried to ally themselves with these supra-human powers. We can tell of mankind's experiences with seed planting and harvesting, with floods and droughts, with peace and war, with sickness and death, showing the children some of the many different ways men have met their problems and the variant beliefs and customs that came to be. All the while we should be linking these experiences of the far away and the long ago with known present-day customs and with the children's own experiences with the elemental forces of nature, with the mysteries of life and

death, and with scientific modern findings regarding these matters until the children are stirred to sound interpretations for themselves and to deep appreciations. Children can then look at the religious faiths of their fathers and at those of the churches and synagogues with understanding and sympathy, and can become *intelligently* free to be as wise householders who go into the storehouses of tradition and of modern knowledge and bring forth with discrimination things both new and old.

These five principles then are proposed for consideration: first, the principle of freedom for the children themselves rather than simply for their elders; second, the building of religious beliefs in harmony with the accepted findings of the sciences rather than in opposition to these findings; third, keeping the child's emotional well-being as the primary goal; fourth, making the process of religious study one of unhampered, and unembarrassed exploration into the large area of man's variant religious experiences in different times and cultures; fifth, directing the process of comparison of differing religions by going back to the common experiences and common needs and hopes which all men share and so leading children to appreciate both the universal elements and the differences in religions.

How These Principles May Be Applied

These are hard sayings. If really applied such principles would mean a new venture in education. Most religious educators trained in their particular churches and synagogues are not prepared either to direct or even to approve of such teaching. Some public school administrators and teachers may possibly find the general point of view here proposed more congenial to their ideals of education than will many churchmen. Nevertheless, most public schoolmen and women, except as they have been self-

educated, are themselves largely the products of a process of religious indoctrination, usually of a meagre and inadequate quality. When religious education has been linked to public education in European countries, no such principles as here proposed have governed the plans followed. Here in America we have an opportunity to look at the problem from a new angle and to make an experiment never before attempted. The principles here outlined are all in harmony with the democratic spirit and with the democratic way of education. If we disregard them we strike at a tender growing point in our democratic life.

Not yet willing to say such principles are impossible to apply, I make bold to outline four steps which school authorities might take in preparation for such a possible experiment in religious education as a part of the total program in our public schools:

The responsibility for the administration, the planning and the execution of any program of religious education connected with the public schools should be carried by the school authorities themselves, with the cooperation of those religious leaders in the community who are prepared to be democratic in their approach to religion.

Whatever programs are initiated should be integrated in natural ways with the curriculum as a whole.

Since such religious education represents a new venture and since well-trained and experienced teachers are not available, normal schools and teachers colleges should establish experimental centers where these new procedures may be tried out on a small scale and where appropriate textbooks may be produced. Such schools should also establish special courses for teachers of religion preparing for this new type of teaching.

... **AS FAR AS EDUCATION** is concerned, there are many types of action that may be taken to serve the interest of economic security and national morale. For example, something substantial can be done now by the agencies in education to give youth and adults a more accurate knowledge of the varying conditions under which men live and work, a stronger disposition to improve these conditions when necessary, and greater skills in developing a specific program of action.—From *Education and the Morale of a Free People*, Educational Policies Commission.

Since the task is new and inescapably difficult, the beginnings should be made on a small scale and in those communities providing the best possible conditions for success.

In many communities, where other principles than those here outlined have been applied, the unfortunate mistake has been made of launching extensive programs with a large teaching personnel that is unprepared and confused. Hurried undertakings into so difficult a realm are likely, in the end, to lead to the defeat of the very values we seek. The growing sense of need throughout the country for a richer public education that will not leave untouched one of the major interests of mankind deserves the serious attention of educators. It means something important.

But before that need can be met, both religious and secular leaders will have to do much more fundamental thinking than seems as yet to be emerging. A perilous venture is being launched without due preparation and without counting the cost. The churches have behind them a long record of stupid failure in religious education. The Sunday School as an institution, lags far behind general education in the quality of its programs, of its equipment, of its textbooks and of its teaching and supervisory staffs. The majority of ministers and rabbis have either looked down upon religious education as of minor importance or they have exploited it for propaganda ends. Public school men should be warned before accepting the leadership of such groups.

But what substitute preparation are public educators making? "Where shall wisdom be found?"

First the Blade, Then the Ear

To the question, What experiences of children have religious significance? the answer might well be, All of them. Everything that happens to one either contributes to better development and understanding or delays integration of personality. Mrs. Hall, Teacher of Social Studies, Workshop School, Longmeadow, Massachusetts, describes several types of children's experiences which have religious significance important for teachers to know about, and interprets them.

A COMMON OCCURRENCE in discussion groups about religion is for someone to say early in the hour, "Before we go farther I think we should define religion." The rest of the period is then spent in more or less fruitless attempts to put into "a few brief words" a concept which, more than almost any other in the language, means something different to each individual. Because religion is so inclusive a term I want to state here the point of view concerning it from which this article is written. I make no effort to define religion but I consider a religious person to be one who *consciously* lives in the light of what he believes is the real nature of the universe.¹

It is evident that such an interpretation makes real religious living an achievement of maturity and that, I believe, it is. But that is also true of friendship in its deeper sense, of wisdom (as over against information), and of other phases of life. They are

¹For a fuller statement of this point of view, see *Children Can See Life Whole*. By Mary Ross Hall. New York: Association Press. Especially p. 6. Reviewed on page 277 of this issue.

attained by ripened experience. One learns to be a real friend slowly and often under rigid self-discipline. So the process of becoming a truly religious person has its beginnings in early childhood experiences and these increase in depth and variety of meaning as long as we live. I think this will make it clear why the importance of learning to see meaning in a situation is stressed so much in what follows.

Feelings of Wonder and Interest

The earliest stages of religion in the life of the child are probably the feelings of awe or reverence toward the beautiful or wonderful in his environment, in nature or in personal relationships. Some may question the use of the term religion here; but how can we draw a sharp line around it? At least these feelings surely form the roots of more mature experiences involving conduct motivated by faith as well as by reason.

This morning I sat in a room opening into that of a small nursery-school group. Five little children were standing around a teacher who was reading to them a simple version of the story of the shepherds and the baby born in Bethlehem. She read quietly and with few comments but with reverence and a genuine love for the story evident in her manner. The children were quiet and completely absorbed in the story. Their faces were lovely to see. Three times they asked for the story and during the day they talked of it often. I saw the same group a few weeks ago plant bulbs in bowls of water and pebbles, and have watched their faces as they watered the plants and found white roots appearing

and green shoots starting. These are experiences which one would covet for every child and which seem to me to have genuinely religious significance.

Often the beautiful and wonderful call out only wide-eyed silence from children. At other times questions come, often far more profound than the adult can answer. But the child does not want or need a complete answer. "That is something people have thought and wondered about a great deal. We don't know the whole answer but this much we do know; perhaps we can learn more together." Such a beginning gives enough needed security but leaves room for growth of ideas.

In the world of social chaos in which today's children find themselves it is more important than ever to help them know of some things that cannot be shaken, to realize that we are parts of a larger universe in which there is order, with laws that can be learned and resources which even a little child can use. In her book, *Child and Universe*, Bertha Stevens gives to the teacher not only a wealth of material for the understanding of nature but also the results of her long teaching experience in relating the study of natural science with the elementary curriculum. With a deeply religious attitude and at the same time with the discipline of the scientist, Miss Stevens is able to present her material with sensitivity and skill. Anyone who has seen her with a group of children realizes what an opportunity is here.

More limited in the variety of their contacts with nature than the children of the open country, city children need even more to be made aware of the order and rhythm in the phases of natural life within their reach—the changes of weather, the succession of seasons, the life of plants or animals. Beside the feelings of wonder and increased security called forth in the child by pattern, order, and dependability in

nature, we find also a warm, eager interest in living things and desire to relate himself to them. We have all seen this in children's interest in young animals and most of us carry into adult life the spontaneous feeling of responsibility for anything young and weak. The child's natural response of love and protectiveness to a baby duck, a pet puppy, or a new baby may be accompanied by wonder and delight at finding the same order and response to law in their development that he saw in the growth of seeds planted in the window-box, and begin to sense something of the meaning of *universe*.

Learning to See Meaning

Wonder and delight are often called forth by the celebration of festivals. The setting of special decorations and ceremonies; the atmosphere of joy, reverence, and solemnity make a strong impression on a child. But even rather young children can, under the right leadership, become aware of more than *feeling* produced by atmosphere. A second step in the growth of the spirit is learning to see *meaning*.

For what are we glad at Thanksgiving? Are there people who haven't so much to be glad about? Why is that true? Can we do anything to change it?

Why do people give presents at Christmas? Why did Jesus mean so much to those who knew him?

What are some of the reasons why people love and honor Lincoln?

Another value which we may achieve in the celebration of festivals is that of learning to appreciate the beauty and meaning in the festivals of different faiths. I know of one public school which celebrated the Christmas season this year with a program combining the Jewish Hanukkah celebration and that of Christmas. Not only are the children growing in appreciation of each other's background

but so are the parents of both traditions who were asked to advise with the teachers in planning the program.

Much can be done to help children be thoughtful about meanings in other activities to which the response has often been almost entirely one of feeling. One of these is the use of songs, especially hymns. Now there are some great hymns which though they assume a theology either outgrown or beyond a child's comprehension are yet so great in musical quality or are the expression of experience so noble that he may sense their greatness as he sings. These, however, are generally used in adult situations in which the child is hardly a full participant. For children's own situations there surely is enough great music with texts of which one can approve and which do not contain an unfortunate ideology. As illustration of this point I cite lines from "The Netherlands Prayer of Thanksgiving." It is sung in many elementary schools and is a noble piece of music, and yet, what does the text say?

The wicked, oppressing, cease them from distressing,

Sing praises to His name, He forgets not His own.

We all do extol Thee, Thou leader in battle,
And pray that Thou still our Defender will be.
Let Thy congregation escape tribulation.

Thy name be ever praised, O Lord, make us free.

Do we really want our children to express self-satisfied sentiments like that in song, identifying God with "our" side, with the same attitude we have criticized in other peoples? I feel it is better either to substitute other words which express a finer ideal of giving thanks or to choose some other great hymn.

We often hear it said, "O, children never pay any attention to the words they sing." Much of the time this unfortunately is true of adults as well as children. But why

should we not learn to think of what we sing? Was not similar indifference to content of religious services one of the things which produced the reformation movement? If we are eventually to love the Lord our God with all our *mind* as well as our heart and soul and strength, may we not, with benefit, use our minds here as well as elsewhere?

I realize the risk of building up an unchildlike pattern of verbal response or of expecting reasoning at too early an age. It is highly important that the teacher study the mental and emotional maturity of the group with which she is working and the difference between individual children, using as far as possible only words and ideas within their grasp and only in amount appropriate to their level of development.

As Expressed in Creative Writing and Questions

Evidence of the significance of some experiences for children may be seen in their creative writing. Here again an adult needs to use every effort to keep the children away from mere patter, an echo of her own expressions or those of others. The following brief bits seem to me to sound sincere and natural. The first two are from prayers written by public-school children at Thanksgiving time.

We thank Thee for the place called home, a place where we can rest, a place that all of us don't have, a place that really is best. We thank Thee for the land and sea, the food we like to eat and most of all for Thee.

Thank you for the rain
For the snow that gives us rides,
For the sun that dries and warms,
For birds we love
That make their nests and raise their babies,
God is so peaceful to us—Thank you.²

The third is from a poem which its ten-

² *Ibid.*, p. 150.

year-old author calls "Spring Sunshine."

And tulips point up
To praise You.
Oh, Sun,
Make us bright
And shining as you.³

There are other aspects of a child's relation to the universe with which a teacher may have to deal but which are so profound that I feel they can only be mentioned here. Among them are questions concerning the origin of life, deep-seated fears, the mystery of suffering, especially death, and the concept of God. One of the most helpful books dealing with these aspects of religious development is the volume, *Consider the Children, How They Grow*, by Manwell and Fahs.⁴

Professor Chave of the University of Chicago has made a list of values which he considers important for the spiritual development of children and young people. Some of these have been mentioned in other terms above; others assume more mature levels of development than those of young children, but they offer practical guides by which we may test some of the

³ *Ibid.*, p. 149.

⁴ *Consider the Children, How They Grow*. By Elizabeth Manwell and Sophie L. Fahs. Boston: Beacon Press. 1941.

experiences of the children with whom we work.⁵

As I was planning this article I asked an older child what things she remembered in her school experience which had made her feel more religious. Christmas celebrations were mentioned at once. Then she said, "I know what doesn't—to have a teacher get up and rattle through the Bible reading so fast we don't even know what she says. Some of the kids think it's funny and others are just bored; they read or do other things till it's over." Here is a situation where children are practising a negative response to something definitely associated in their minds with religion. If such an observance cannot be done well, something that all great literature deserves, it would better be omitted.

This brings me to my last point and the most important one. Children's experience can take on religious significance when they work with a religious person. The word, God, may or may not be mentioned; there may never be a formal, conventional expression of religious ideas, but children sense and respond to the qualities of security, serenity, humility, reverence and radiance in personality, the achievements of truly religious living.

⁵ See "Religion in the Educational Experience of Children and Youth: A Syllabus," by Harrison S. Elliott in *Religious Education*, October-December, 1941, pp. 195-211.

Religion

By Eleanor Graham

"What is religion?" asked the six-year-old.
I tried to answer: "It's the way you feel
When lovely things are near you—sunshine's gold;
Or happy music from the bells that peal
In church; or soft cloud-shadows slowly creeping;
Or stars—"

He stopped me there: "I know, I guess.
Like looking at the baby when he's sleeping.
Is that the way you mean?" And I said, "Yes."

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Conflicting Codes of Morality in the Life of the Child

The conflict between the will to be free and the struggle to be subservient leads individuals to seek security in varying groups. How these groups contribute to security or aggravate conflicts is described by Mr. Trow, Professor of Educational Psychology, University of Michigan. He concludes his article by pointing out the significance of these conflicts to those responsible for the educational guidance of children.

THE FOLLOWING HYMN of rebellion quoted below, according to report, was sung by a four-year-old boy each evening in his bathtub. His mother copied down this fragment; the chant goes on endlessly, entirely on one note except that the voice drops on the last word of every line:

He will just do nothing at all,
He will just sit there in the noonday sun.
And when they speak to him, he will not answer them,
Because he does not care to.
He will stick them with spears and put them in the garbage.
When they tell him to eat his dinner, he will just laugh at them,
And he will not take his nap, because he does not care to.
He will not talk to them, he will not say nothing,
He will just sit there in the noonday sun.
He will go away and play with the Panda.
He will not speak to nobody because he doesn't have to.
And when they come to look for him they will not find him,
Because he will not be there.
He will put spikes in their eyes and put them in the garbage,

And put the cover on.
He will not go out in the fresh air or eat his vegetables,
And he will get as thin as a marble.
He will not do nothing at all.
He will just sit there in the noonday sun.¹

Here is a spontaneous expression of what is known as *negativism*. Usually the utterance is not on this exalted Homeric plane. More often it takes the form of a peevish and disgruntled, "No!" or a pugnacious, "I won't," or a vigorous turning away or running in the opposite direction, or asking, "Why should I?" One child I know got back at the world by drinking his milk when he was told to eat his spinach, and eating his spinach when he was told to drink his milk!

Negativism is the first clear and unequivocal expression of the struggle for freedom from domination, the true beginning of the child's psychological weaning. It is a revolt against direction, an assertion of individuality, the emancipation proclamation of childhood. In some cases the child may find revolt futile and give up, and so become a slave to his parents' wishes; but more normally he will continue to rebel, to argue, to disagree or perhaps dissemble in order to keep peace in the family. He has embarked on a voyage of discovery of himself. He is learning that he is an individual who can go his way according to his own desire and interest. He can make his own choices. He is discovering that he can sometimes

¹ From *The New Yorker*, July 1, 1939, p. 11. Quoted by permission.

TROW do as he pleases. As he grows older, his intellect and his efforts are employed to maintain his freedom from domination. He may escape from those who would try to mold him to their way of thinking. He may openly rebel, and weld others into an organization which will make demands and back them by force. He may engage in strikes, riots, or wars against oppressors; and once his right to freedom has been established, he will endeavor to bequeath it to his heirs, that they, too, may have this freedom for which he has struggled.

In sharp contrast with the hymn of emancipation of the four-year-old child is another juvenile document. This, too, has a somewhat formal and rhetorical sound. It is part of a list of rules of a juvenile gang known as the Kluck Klan. The rules are typical of dozens that have been studied. Here they are:

(1) The officers are a Captain, a Lieutenant, and a Sergeant. The Captain can order fellows around.

(2) We are not allowed to fight among ourselves.

(3) When you go out, do as you are told.

(4) If you get caught, don't squeal on the other guys.

(5) Be loyal to the officers.

(6) Do not lie to each other.²

The Conflict Between Freedom and Subservience

The fundamental difference between these two juvenile documents is noted at once. The first is a declaration of freedom and independence; the second is a declaration of subservience. In the first the individual announces to the world: "I will do as I please"; in the second he abjectly swears that he will do what others tell him to. He binds himself by an oath. He enslaves himself to an organization to which he voluntarily turns over his freedom.

In these two documents we have an epitome of the two great conflicting struggles in which the child must continue to engage—the struggle to be an individual, a free man, and the struggle to be subservient, to be a slave. In these two documents we have an epitome of the continuing struggle of the human soul through the vicissitudes of fortune as it wavers between these two unattainable and mutually exclusive goals. Man cannot be wholly slave, for there is that in his nature which must revolt against complete and continued domination. By passive resistance or by active rebellion, often ineffectively, often victoriously, he will assert himself and carry through the struggle to break the shackles which restrain him, to rise and breathe the free air of heaven and say before all, "I am no longer a slave but a man."

But he can never be wholly free, for if he were, he would be completely alone. His life would be a solitary nightmare. He would be a lone beast, belonging nowhere, following only the law of the jungle, the law of tooth and claw. His anarchy would leave him bereft of human sympathy and comradeship and would ere long destroy his reason. A stranger to all that is good save only his own existence, he would soon put an end to that, for it would be utterly without meaning.

A most dramatic illustration of the swing between the two goals of freedom and subservience is to be found in the German youth movement during the first third of the present century. It started primarily as a revolt against the domination of the machine in the large industrial centers, and against the stuffy, over-regulated bourgeois society which the machine created. From the decrees of economic necessity and the demands of convention, youth turned to its rural heritage in quest of its soul. In folk songs and dances, in hikes through the his-

² From *The Gang. A study of 1313 gangs in Chicago.* By F. M. Thrasher. University of Chicago Press, 1927.

toric countryside, and in gatherings around the campfire, youth found its lost freedom. Rigid curricula gave away to free activities in the classroom. Almost anarchic experimentation permitted school children to decide what they would do and how they would do it. The new day seemed to have dawned.

But the rumble of world events burst into the crashing inferno of the first World War. Afterwards the disillusioned youth sought to regain their shattered health. The inflation ruined their prospects for the kind of a life of which they had hoped and dreamed. The pursuit of the folk soul was a hopeless quest—on an empty stomach; so that the various clubs and organizations, which tried to bring back the dream of the past, dwindled in membership. Youth could do what it wanted, but it did not know what it wanted to do! Then sounded the clarion call of "the leader." The political arena opened a way. Uniforms replaced battered clothing. Orders were issued that had the ring of authority. Youth cast off its freedom and followed its "leader." And the cycle was complete. From subservience through freedom to subservience.

I believe it is unnecessary for our youth to follow this cycle. But individually and collectively, in small ways or in large, the conflict between freedom and subservience continues and brings in its wake a host of problems which those of us whose task it is to guide the youth must understand.

As the child's psychological weaning progresses, as he begins to free himself from the complete control and domination of his parents, a peculiar phenomenon occurs. Instead of actually freeing himself from control, he really becomes subject to the control of a different group, that of the children of his own age. This new affiliation with his own age groups aids him in breaking away from parental domi-

nation; only gradually does he realize that it has very exacting rules of its own. And the fundamental rule is loyalty. Practically every juvenile gang has explicit regulations against "squealing," or "tattling," or "telling the teacher," (who is at once regarded as a part of the adult, parent-dominated world from which freedom is sought).

Here then is the first and most obvious point where the child's loyalty to the two groups brings on a conflict. He is carrying on the struggle to belong to the crowd of his own age, to his gang. Here he expects to satisfy his natural need for companionship, security, and recognition. But he must abide by the rules of the gang. He must not tell. But the teacher asks him a direct question: "Do you know who broke the window?"

He is in a quandary. His verbal habits are not well enough developed to provide an evasive answer. Nor can he tell the truth, because he knows that if he says "Yes," the next question will be: "Who was it?" and he dare not tell. So to be loyal to his new group, he says, "I don't know." He is accused of something that he has learned is very bad. He is accused of lying. Perhaps he is punished for lying. But he did what seemed to be the right thing—he remained loyal to his group.

There would be many who would say that such a time-honored handling of the case is quite correct, that the sooner children learn that they can't destroy property or lie about criminal acts the better, that we have to find out who is making trouble, and that the quickest way to do this is by asking them, and if necessary using third degree methods to obtain the facts.

In reality this is a very wrong way to handle such a case, and a teacher or administrator who employs it is guilty of a worse offense than either the boy who broke the window, or the boy who lied when he

said he didn't know who did it. It is a worse offense because the adult, who should know better, has forced the child into perpetrating the falsehood. He is responsible for the crime. It is he who has caused "one of these little ones to stumble." Besides this, he has made the window-breaker a hero, and has set up machinery for more successful delinquencies in the future, since the children have learned the process by which it is dealt with and will take steps to see that it doesn't happen again. And further, and perhaps most important, he has destroyed the possibility for cooperation between the juvenile and adult groups.

Nowhere in our American democracy is there a greater need for intelligent action among educators than in aiding children to meet situations in which conflicting loyalties are involved. Nowhere is there a greater need for intelligent action than in setting up experiences in group cooperation for the common good. These ways have to be learned if they are ever to be used; and if they are not used, we may as well bid farewell to our hopes of functioning democratic institutions.

Just how such a case should be handled could profitably be discussed in small round tables. My suggestion would be that the matter should be put up to the pupils; that the nature of the punishment should be set forth, and its fairness recognized; that the guilty one should be urged by his friends to confess, and if this fails they should be made to understand that it is in their best interest to report, and by so doing make it clear that they do not sanction the destruction of the property of their school. If it does not seem too idealistic, I would say that such a situation could be used to stimulate the pupils to suggest and carry forward activities which would be for the good of their school. Thus cooperation instead of

conflict between the two groups would be developed in the direction of the common good, and experience in the ways of good democratic government would be provided.

This situation has been discussed at some length as a sample of the kind of difficulties into which the quest for freedom and the quest for subservience lead. The child has begun to free himself from the domination of his family; but instead of attaining freedom he has in reality merely subordinated himself to the demands of another group. True, the exactions of the latter are more in accord with the desires of the child, or he will not seek them or submit to them. He will remain unweaned—tied to his mother's apron string, or he will seek other groups which are more congenial.

In What Varying Groups Is Security Sought?

Let us briefly survey some of the varying groups in which individuals seek security, and to whose demands and ideals they willingly submit. In the school there are numerous subgroupings. There are various gangs and cliques, which may develop modes of thinking and acting that conflict with the best interests of the group as a whole. Apart from delinquencies, perhaps the most common characteristic is the development of snobbery, causing unhappiness among those who strive unsuccessfully to be accepted. Differing economic and social status of the parents is often largely responsible.

Then there are the groupings for social occasions, dances, parties, and the like, which set up their separate codes for gaining favor with those of the opposite sex. Rural and urban conflicts sometimes appear, and nationality groupings frequently bring differing cultural sanctions into the school. Children are sometimes taught to steal by their parents, and in such cases the

psychological weaning is more necessary but more difficult, since the child tends to be thrown back to his family loyalties by the opposition his thievery arouses at school.

The older children constitute a prestige group for the younger to imitate. The struggle to be favorably regarded by the older children often results in strange and sometimes in troublesome behavior. In extreme cases, we know that older boys set up standards of delinquency which the youngsters think they must meet. In one city these standards consisted of a record of a half a dozen automobile thefts. The big shots in this juvenile gang did not stop at driving a car that did not belong to them right through the closed doors of the owner's garage. What complicated this situation was the complacency of the fathers who had been up to these same tricks not many years before.

Naturally school people and others interested in children and youth are not content to leave it to chance groupings to determine the codes on the basis of which children act. Boys' and girls' clubs and woodcraft organizations find their primary function in setting up codes and sanctions acceptable to the young members that are also in harmony with the generally accepted ideals of the culture. The boy scout code, which has been widely adopted, is probably one of the best of these. The expectation is that the young people will come gradually to accept and practice such artificially established folkways. If they are not too much at odds with the codes of other groups, and if they provide a feeling of group solidarity and a mode of generalized response that works satisfactorily in other situations, they may help to furnish the life orientation which the individual seeks.

On the other hand, such organizations sometimes set up such rigid standards of

conduct that children either decline to be interested; or if they join, they either break the rules in underhanded ways or else become priggish. Some of the religious sects set up rigid restrictions like not going to the movies, or wearing—or not wearing—certain kinds of clothing, and the like. If children really accept such definitions of wrong doing, they are apt to be troubled later by the discovery that many respectable people do not believe as they have been taught. The two codes are in conflict and they don't know what to do.

As a result of his experiences with different groups, the child gradually discovers something which no one of his adult advisers ever tells him. What he discovers is that it is the group which determines what is right and what is wrong; and further, that what is right in one group may be wrong in another. He discovers out of sad experience that what his own group may reward another will punish; and his consolation lies only in the fact that what his group may punish him for may bring him a reward in another. He is therefore constantly on trial; and in his quest for freedom to do as he pleases, he is always ready to forsake one group which opposes or rejects him and to fly to another which is willing to sanction what has made him persona non grata elsewhere. And groups can be found to sanction almost any kind of conduct.

If a boy takes someone else's parked car and uses it to go on a joy ride, he is acting in a rather ideal fashion in the eyes of his gang, his girl friend, and perhaps his father who is glad to see the lad has some spirit and is a chip off the old block—an attitude which shows through the thin veil of conventional reprimand. But this conduct is not commendable in the eyes of the school teachers or the police. Similarly, a boy enjoys the out-of-doors, lolling in the sun, fishing or doing nothing, quite in

harmony with a goodly tradition of esthetes, Epicurians, and nature lovers about whom he has never heard. But this is laziness and a sin to the followers of Poor Richard, and he is a "problem" because he does not work "up to his capacity." He made the mistake of being born in a commercial age. Or a girl finds her greatest pleasure with her like-minded friends in delighting young men. Perhaps quite unwittingly she feels a call to the oldest of the professions, and in her less effective way she joins the immortal company of women who have inspired the kings and generals and creative artists of the past and have left their indelible mark on the pages of history.

It is at once evident that the conflicts which make the same conduct acceptable in one group but not in another are not peculiar to childhood. Many a Robin Hood has been the hero of the poor and a pain in the neck to the Sheriffs of Nottingham. Occasionally a school superintendent has been an ideal to the school people, but a "trouble-maker" for the local politicians; and it sometimes happens that the acts which make a teacher popular with his pupils are frowned on by his less popular colleagues. The stylish clothing or car that helps us "keep up with the Joneses" brings commendation among those by whom the owner aspires to be accepted; but the extravagance is frowned on by the frugal and condemned as ostentation and display. The compromises of politics which seem to be necessary to get things done are condemned by the theorists in political science. Common business practices present innumerable illustrations of conflicting systems of ethics, some of which cause the inexperienced youth considerable concern.

One young man reported that the first job he got after leaving school was attaching painted tags to paint cans. According to the label the paint on the tags was a

sample of the paint inside the can. The durability of this sample could be tested by the buyer in various ways. But the lad knew that this tough so-called sample bore no relation to the actual paint in the can. Was he to continue to attach these labels to cheat the gullible buyer? Or was he to protest, and lose his job?

Significance of Conflicting Codes Between Pupil and School

These illustrations will, I hope, serve to bring out the point that the kind of conduct which is punished in one way or another in school is not mere individual perversion on the part of certain pupils, but is conduct which certain groups to which pupils belong or aspire to belong consider harmless or even commendable. And what is the significance of all this?

First, the school is derelict in its duty if it does not acquaint pupils with some of these conflicts which lie ahead, so that they will be more ready to meet the situations when they arise.

Second, the school in its treatment must take into account the nature of the group which gives the pupil support in his "wrong doing." It must recognize that there are different standards, and that what looks like undesirable conduct to the teacher may have been prompted by loyalty and a belief that it is right. The lives of some teachers have been so restricted by circumstance as to render them incapable of comprehending the wide diversities of background from which pupils come, and hence they regard as sin what many take for granted.

Third, the school must very carefully examine its own code. Many a teacher, in the treatment of pupils, is guilty of serious offenses in the eyes of the pupils, and in the eyes of most adults as well. Some of the common teacher offenses are the following: rudeness—scolding and in other

ways showing disrespect for the personalities of the pupil; injustice—accusing pupils of doing what they did not do; and untrustworthiness—not keeping pupils' confidences.

Such errors often bring the parents to the principal's or superintendent's office. The administrator is then in a quandary. Will he be loyal to his teaching staff and thus lend his support to the injustice? If so, he is guilty of still another offense, hypocrisy—preaching one thing and doing another—and parents and children alike will be quick to discover it. Educators need to ponder the problem of their codes and their loyalties and consider ways in which pupils can be dealt with which harmonize different groups instead of bringing them into conflict.

Fourth, the school must through its organizational structure create a spirit animating the whole which will set up a code of general acceptability embodying the basic tenets of our common culture. This cannot be done, I venture to say, by adopting a superficial scheme for "discussion" and rating. It must grow out of the democratic practices of the school itself and all its activities.

Can the conflict of loyalties ever be resolved? For the individual, how can the struggle for subservience and the struggle

for freedom end? The struggle for subservience can end in the discovery of a group whose code of conduct is in harmony with the nature and needs of the individual. It may be that he will find rest in the arms of the church; it may be that he will need to work for a political party, a labor union, or a chamber of commerce, or he may find satisfaction in the groups or organizations of those of similar vocational or avocational interest, artistic, or professional, or recreational. With them he feels at home because their standards and ways of acting are his ways.

The struggle for freedom can end in the building of ideals or in personification of the best that the individual has found in his own experience. Thus in imagination he becomes his parents, his teachers or others who have had "prestige value" for him. So, in choosing what he will be, to whatever group he may belong, he can still be himself. Schools can contribute something, much more than they have, to the building of his ideals which will maintain for him the standards of conduct and achievement that will enable him to realize his potentialities, and be what he wants to be as an individual and as an effective member of those groups which are making a positive contribution to our common American culture.

... *BUT WE TROUBLE OUR* hearts with foolish doubts and unwise questionings—the fear of death, the hope of survival, forgiveness, heaven, hell. Rewards and punishments hereafter? What bribes we ask for our perfunctory righteousness! The oak spreads its arms in the sun, puts out leaves and tassels and, if the season will, scatters down acorns. But it does not querulously demand to know where fall its seeds or whether they will root and grow to saplings. There should be no question of reward: to function is the task assigned. To seek outlet for our emotions, our intellect, our spiritual cravings, to blossom and fruit with our whole nature, to keep its unity and proportion—of such is our occupation.—From *Lanterns on the Levee* by William Alexander Percy. (Knopf, 1941, pp. 320-321).

A Snail Shell

Two contributors to this issue speak of the wealth of material to be found in Bertha Stevens' books, "Child and Universe" and "How Miracles Abound," which contributes to the child's better understanding of the universe in which he lives. Mrs. Ross says, "In the world of social chaos in which today's children find themselves it is more important than ever to help them know of some things that cannot be shaken, to realize that we are parts of a larger universe in which there is order, with laws that can be learned and resources which even a little child can use." Sometime ago Miss Stevens sent us the galley proofs of one chapter from "How Miracles Abound" with her permission and that of her publisher, The John Day Company, to share it with the readers of CHILDHOOD EDUCATION. A portion of this chapter, "A Snail Shell," is reprinted here because of its own particular merits and because it illustrates points made by both Mrs. Ross and Mrs. Fabs.

What is art

But life . . .

When, graduating up in a spiral line
Of still expanding and ascending gyres,
It pushes toward the intense significance
Of all things, hungry for the Infinite?

Elizabeth Barrett Browning

A LITTLE SPIRAL SNAIL shell is almost sure to be among the trophies which children bring home from a walk in the woods. The pattern of it—definite, compact, expanding, whorled—is irresistibly interesting.

There is reason for this attraction. The spiral is an insistent form in nature. It exemplifies vitality, growth, becoming; it is dynamic as truly as the circle is static.

The truth may be that spirality is the basic movement principle of the universal creation. Science suggests that suns and worlds have evolved spirally; and it tells us specifically that spiral tendency is manifested throughout plant and animal structure.

Spiral process reveals itself commonly in realms of discovery and observation which can be claimed by children. Once their interest in the spiral has been aroused, they will find it in many guises, and in movements as well as in forms. A walk in any natural area—in the woods, along a shore or through a field—will almost surely bring to light interesting instances of it.

When children examine with special care the parts of some growing plant they are likely to discover spiral indications which have escaped them before. They find spiral form in twisted root, trunk, stem, and tendril; and sometimes in withered flower and withered leaf. Also, in the outline of begonia and other leaves, in the formation of leaf rosettes, and in the arrangement of leaves on a stem. They may find it, in some cases, in leaf and flower buds, in flowers as a whole and in flower parts, in seed capsules, fruits, and seeds. If children assemble maple-keys, grapevine tendrils, milkweed pods, and pine cones, they have brought together interestingly different plant spirals. The animal world affords common examples, too; many species of shells, in addition to the snail's shell; certain larva cases, such as the chrysalis of the butterfly, horns and cilia (hairs). Spiral movements are illustrated in the winding of the thread of a spider web; in bird and insect flight. The inanimate world also has its examples.

Spirals may be seen in the action of hurricane, cyclone, whirlwind, waterspout, and waves. They are recorded in wind marks in sand and dust; they are seen in the wind's whirling of leaves.

Spirals in Art

Children, awakened to this interest in spirals, see them everywhere, not only in nature but in applied design—as it appears in architecture, in fabrics, wallpapers, and floor-coverings, wood and metal work, furniture, utensils and jewelry. They may extend their knowledge and appreciation of spirals by looking at illustrations of them in natural science textbooks, in books of nature photography and in art books;¹ also by visiting galleries of painting and sculpture.

Chinese and Japanese artists, particularly, have shown regard for the beauty of nature's spiral forms. This can be noted in their painting of chrysanthemums, of sea waves, fishes, shells, plumage, trees. Leonardo da Vinci, Italian painter of the fifteenth century, is regarded by some critics as the outstanding exponent of spirals in art. Some children have discernment enough to discover spiral design in the composition and in parts of the figures in his *Santa Rosa* and *The Angel of the Annunciation*; also in his flower, dust, smoke, and water studies. The German Dürer is another painter whose works are interesting from this standpoint. The response of Greek art to the appeal of the spiral is shown in the volutes of the Ionic column and the recurved acanthus leaves of the Corinthian column. A notable, exquisite painting of a spiral shell has been made by a contemporary American artist, Georgia O'Keeffe. The original is some-

times exhibited in a New York City gallery.²

Children who have collected examples of natural spirals, or observed them through other means, can make drawings of these, or prints or casts. Clay prints are made successfully from flat shells, coiled fern fronds, stem ends of pine cones, and tendrils. Casts can be made from such forms as thick shells, entire pine cones, and seed-heads of sunflowers.

Some natural objects, children discover, show an elaboration of spiral design which may seem to the beholder like deliberate ornamentation. The spiny murex shell provides an illustration. Spiral forms, they find, may be flat, depressed, moundlike, cone-shaped, or cylindrical. Some are wide-whorled, and bulging in the whorls which were latest formed; others are long and slender, increasing gradually from the apex. Some have many whorls; some have few. Some are tightly coiled; some, loosely. Many spirals are dextral; that is, their whorls are turned to the left but the ending is on the right. The minority are reverse; that is, sinistral, or turned to the right and ending on the left. These are interesting distinctions which children take pleasure in making.

About the Snail

From such wide experience of spirals, children may return with renewed interest to the snail shell, realizing the particular type of spiral which it illustrates, and wondering, perhaps, how and why the shell has taken this form. Acquaintance with the animal which lives in it may be the next step of their program. It is surprising how few of the children who carry snail shells home from a walk ever see the animal—so wary is it of danger and so sure are the children that no animal is within. But, in many instances, snail shells which

¹ Numerous illustrations are provided in *Curves of Life*. By Theodore Andrea Cook. New York: Henry Holt and Company, 1914.

² On American Place, 509 Madison Avenue.

are seemingly mud-clogged and uninhabited really have a living tenant whose presence is unguessed because the "door" is closed. If children will look carefully and make sure that the closing is effected by some substance other than mud, their patience may be rewarded if they set the shell down and quietly wait for the animal to appear. A pond snail, emerging, slowly erects its shell from a horizontal to a vertical position—an action which surprises and pleases children, even if they have seen it before.

A snail which has a shell never leaves it; separated from the shell the animal does not live. The shell is its refuge in danger; its shelter during the hibernating months of winter; its life-saver for conserving needed moisture in a situation of drought.

The shell of a very young snail resembles that of the maturer snails in form. Its shell is spiral from the beginning, although at first it is transparent and has but one or two tiny whorls. The record of a snail's early life-period is seen in the tight little coil at the center or the apex of an "old" snail's shell. Additions to the shell are being made continually at the other end as long as the animal lives. The whole body of a snail is covered with a membrane called the mantle which adheres to the shell. The part of it which surrounds the shell opening, or aperture, secretes the mucus and lime for the epiphragm and also provides the material with which the shell is built and so beautifully colored.

If any snail shell be examined closely, fine lines or ridges are likely to be seen on the whorls. If children do not see these readily, a magnifier can help. It is a thrilling experience for children to send a little shell to a nature photographer to have its picture taken as it appears through a microscope. There is, in any snail shell, an impressive regularity in the lines, ridges, and proportional whorls—which awaits dis-

covery. These lines, ridges, and whorls record the animal's growing; rhythmic "ripple-marks of growth,"³ J. Arthur Thomson has called them. They have been compared to the structural rings in a tree stump, and the zones in the scale of a fish. However, a line or ridge on the shell does not indicate an annual period of growth. Most snail species do not have a long life; the majority are said to live not more than a year or two. Part by part the shell whorl has continued and expanded, in rhythmic curves, as if music had governed its turning. The "frozen music" of the animal's "harmonious life," Mr. Thomson has described it.

Children who wish to increase their acquaintance with land snails and pond snails can make a snail garden, using a rectangular glass container with screening over the top, or covering a wooden framework with screening to serve as both side walls and top. The essentials are a ground of woods soil which is several inches deep, and kept moist; a pan of pond water embedded in the soil; and, for food, fresh leaves and berries placed on the ground and algae placed in the water. Children's imagination can have free rein in beautifying their garden: it can be landscaped transiently with moss and transplanted ferns and little flowering plants; pebbles can border the "pond." The common garden snail and most of the pond snails are vegetarian; but since some snail species are carnivorous, it is safest to bring together only those whose habits one is sure of. If the dwellers in the garden are inactive for a day or two, they should be returned to the habitat from which they were taken. In fact, when little children are the caretakers, it is advisable to consider a snail garden, an aquarium, or any other "home" for living things an intentionally transient venture. It is un-

³ *Biology for Everyman*. New York: E. P. Dutton and Company, 1935, p. 410.

desirable to let children be the cause of the animals' decline or death.

The Spiral Principle—Analogies

The spiral principle, as already stated, is in essence a becoming; it carries with it suggestion of unfolding growth, expansion, and infinite inclusiveness. To the student of fundamental rhythmic body movement it is an experience of co-ordination, dynamic strength, and universality.

Children can feel something of the dynamic power of the spiral through rhythmic exercises and free dance. Music, in slow waltz time, helps the motivation. If they start in a standing position, with the feet fairly wide apart and the weight on one foot, alternate rhythmic changes of weight can be made easily and unconsciously as those become needed by the spiral movement of the rest of the body. The spiral starts small, in the spiral turns of hand and forearm held in front of the thorax. The turns move through greater and greater area with greater and greater power as the whole arm, and eventually the region of the thorax becomes involved. In the final stage the whole body is co-ordinated in the movement and perhaps impelled to move across the floor. The length of one's arm of course limits the

actual range of the spiral; but the feeling of moving outward and still farther outward, endlessly, is possible notwithstanding.

A group of children, moving to music, have gone spirally about the floor in formations suggesting the spiral flight of a flock of pigeons; or, moving in a processional line, they have wound and unwound a spiral.

Musical compositions as well as paintings and sculpture sometimes derive their unity and power from spiral construction. The spiral principle may seem to anyone to correspond to some inner realization. It finds an analogy, perhaps, in the widening of thought and understanding in individual human experience. From whatever point one has gained, he may progress on and on with an ever expanding consciousness, held always to one constant center; each phase in the continuity of experience bears inherent relation to the phases which precede and follow. Merely to think of the spiral form, evolving from center out, to infinity, makes for expansion of feeling. The adult who experiences and realizes this meaning will concede the worth-whileness of children's preoccupation with nature's spiral forms.

Defense Work

Defense work? Do I do defense work?
Well, some—you see I guide the six-year-olds.
Yes, we learn to pledge allegiance and to sing "America,"
And even what is meant by "United States," "Indivisible," and "Freedom."
Yes, we know the colors of our flag and what they stand for, too,
We even know that there is a war, and we know what it does to you.
But—we work and play and laugh and sing,
We love our friends and the joy they bring,
We learn to be independent, cooperative and kind,
With thoughtfulness and tolerance toward all others we may find.
Defense work? Not much compared with air craft, tanks, ammunition—
This teaching of the American, the Yank—the future citizen!
Yet I attempt to bring to him the security of his position—
He is an American and right proud of its tradition!
Defense work? Do I do defense work?
Well, some—you see I guide the six-year-olds.

—Doris M. Harpham, Monroe, Michigan

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(Continued on page 273)

On Children and Books

"We must give them (children) not what we think they ought to have, but everything we have to give, without restraint, with absolute frankness, and honesty and sincerity," says Robert Lawson in this article prepared from an address before The American Library Association: Meeting of the Section for Library Work with Children, June 20, 1941, at Boston. It was at this meeting that Mr. Lawson, well-known illustrator of "Ferdinand," "Wee Gillis," "Mr. Popper's Penguins," and author-illustrator of "Ben and Me" and "I Discover Columbus," was Awarded the Caldecott Medal for "They Were Strong and Good."

I FEEL A TINY BIT as though I were acting under false pretenses in accepting this Caldecott Medal. For one thing I have never believed that awards should be given for any one particular work. It might be just a fluke, a flash in the pan. And in one particular year there might be half a dozen equally deserving works, while in another year the best that could be found might be far below the level of the ones which had to be passed over the year before.

I have always felt that awards might well be given for long and faithful service, as the army gives service stripes, or as our better penal institutions give their guests time off for good behavior. But perhaps it works out that way anyway. Certainly all the holders of the Newbery and Caldecott

Medals whom I know have proven themselves by more than one particular book.

Another reason why I feel a little hesitant is that I really do not consider myself as strictly a "children's illustrator." There is something in that term "Children's Illustrator" that seems to me slightly condescending to children. I think that if we are to make any distinction, we should speak of illustrators who work exclusively for adults as "adult illustrators" and should say it with a slight curl of the lip.

If any one's work, whether it is illustration or writing, looks or sounds as though it were obviously intended for children, then it is talking down to children. It is talking baby-talk with illustration which is silly, and which children bitterly resent.

I have never seen in the work of any of the illustrators whom children have loved for generations the slightest indication that they were catering to limited tastes or limited understandings.

Personally I feel that children are much less limited in their tastes and understandings than adults are. For children are not limited by stupid second-hand notions of what they *ought* to like, or how they *ought* to think. They have not read articles or heard lectures on what they should admire or how they should regard things. *They* have not heard anything about "trends" or "influences." They do not know that they ought to admire certain art because it is "naive" or "spontaneous" or because it has a "vibrant line," or because it has been drawn with a kitchen spoon on a discarded shirt front.

Grownups may feel that certain books *must* be read or certain art *must* be admired

Editor's Note: This article is reprinted by special permission of *The Horn Book*, (July-August, 1941, issue) and The American Library Association.

because its creator lives entirely on cauliflower juice or sleeps standing up or bathes only in the dark of the moon, but children are not impressed by this sort of thing. They are too close to the everlasting truth from which they have sprung. They have not yet been educated or "guided" or "moulded" into the awful ruts of grown-upness. They are, for a pitifully few short years, honest and sincere, clear-eyed and openminded. To give them anything less than the utmost that we possess of frankness, honesty and sincerity is, to my mind, the lowest possible crime.

I have worked for so-called adults for a good many years. It is only in the last few years that I have done much work for children, and I must say I can't see any difference except that working for children is a little harder, it is more fun, it pays much less in money, but much more in self-respect.

I have always found that trying to *rise* to the levels demanded by the clear ideals of children is a far more responsible task and a much more satisfying accomplishment than meeting the muddle-headed demands of their elders. Frequently some serious-minded soul says to me, about some drawing or bit of writing, "I don't think a ten-year-old child would understand that." When I was doing the drawings for *Ferdinand* an elderly aunt of mine looked over the complete sketches and the text and then said, "I just don't see any sense in this thing at all; I don't see why you're wasting your time on it. The idea of a bull smelling flowers; it just doesn't make sense." I tried halfheartedly to explain that it wasn't nonsense, but she refused to be impressed and finally she said, "Well, I guess I'm just not whimsical." If you knew my Aunt Emma you'd realize what an understatement *that* was.

Perhaps I have a retarded mentality that causes me to look up to the child of twelve

and places grownups completely beyond my mental horizon, but I should hesitate a long, long time before pronouncing *anything* as above the head of a ten-year-old child.

For They Are Strong and Good

If people with this point of view could only look back to their own childhoods and remember the amazing conglomeration of ideas, of excitements, of curiosity and longings that filled their heads at the age of ten, they would never *dare* say what should or should not be given to children. I know that scientists now have all sorts of wonderful tests. With wooden cubes and gobs of mud and colored beads they can give mental ratings and prove whatever theory they happen to be intrigued with at the moment.

But any one who has ever been a child, and most of us have, knows that these things only skim the surface and that no one short of God can begin to plumb, to arrange or to classify the weird hodgepodge that forms the mind of a child. And the deeper, the more important certain thoughts and ideas are to them, the more jealously they cherish and shield them from the prying fingers of meddling grownups.

No one can possibly tell what tiny detail of a drawing or what seemingly trivial phrase in a story will be the spark that sets off a great flash in the mind of some child, a flash that will leave a glow there until the day he dies. I have had many letters from children about books and drawings I have done and it is amazing to see what different things have given different children their greatest thrill. Nothing that you could possibly count on, nothing that could possibly be planned, a tiny detail in the corner of some drawing, a particular word or phrase, has opened a window for some

child; it has given him a glimpse of something that will remain always.

When I was three or four years old my mother took me to France. Now I have not the faintest memory of that trip—nothing at all. In fact, the earliest memories that I have do not begin until a couple of years after our return. Except for one thing. I can at this very moment remember the interior of Napoleon's Tomb more clearly than I can now picture our own studio. I can feel the chill of the railing that I pressed my chin on. I can see the slanting yellow sunlight. I can see the dusty, tattered battle-flags the great shining, black sarcophagus with its incised gold lettering.

Why?

Would any learned planner of children's lives recommend a visit to the Tomb of Napoleon for a child of three? I don't think so. It would be way over his head. He couldn't possibly appreciate its grandeur or its significance. Much better to teach him French. Teach him the lovely little French nursery rhymes, and the charming little French songs. They did that, too, and they're all gone with the wind, but Napoleon's Tomb remains clear and vivid.

Why should it? I don't know, and I don't think any one knows. But I do know this: that I am determined to cram into every drawing I do and every page I write for children, or any one else, every detail or thought that I can possibly squeeze into it, without reservation, and without any thought of "age groups" or "planned reading" or any set of rules or theories. I would like to give them everything I know or can think of and let them do the choosing. For I know that some little unconsidered phrase or detail is going to mean a lot to some child. Some seed is somewhere going to take root and flourish, and the more seeds we can plant the more chance there is that one will take hold.

I am sure that Poe was way over my head when I first read him (much of him still is) but he set bells ringing in my mind that still are ringing, and I could cheerfully cut the throat of any one who had forbidden him to me because I was "too young." I am sure that Maurice Hewlett and Sterne and DeMaupassant and Gautier and dozens of others were far beyond me when I read them as a child. I couldn't pronounce their names or half the words, but I would bitterly resent having been deprived of them at the time they came. Now I can see that some of them had certain lacks. I have grown up enough to pick at their feet and find flecks of clay. But then they were pure warmth and glory, romance and beauty.

Many things are, perhaps, above the heads of children, but so are the stars and the moon. Should we declare a blackout because a group or committee or trend has decreed that moonglow and starshine are suited only to the twelve-to-fourteen-year age group?

I have a terrible dread that we shall take our children's books too seriously and solemnly. That we shall consider them as a very special class apart from all other literature, all other art and all real life. Carefully designed, scientifically planned, grouped, classified and very precious. This bit of grouching does not apply to any particular group of people who really have to do with children's books. All the librarians, and editors, publishers and critics that I know are far too overworked with their own jobs to be messing around with the creative end of books, even if they were inclined to.

And Know What They Want

There are, of course, always a few people scattered around in the fringes of things, those natural uplifters and arrangers, who feel the call to plan and regu-

late everything in sight. If or when people of that type get their fingers into any creative field we, who do the creating, might just as well kiss the boys—and girls—goodbye. For there is something about that type of mentality that paralyzes all imagination, that blights all fancy, that curdles all humor—from which joy flees, and beauty hides her face. It is this type of mentality; non-creative, insensitive and animated by a ruthless determination to do children good if it kills them that, I think, forms the greatest menace to children's books today. It is this type of mind that would like to decide what subjects are suitable for children, what phrases children can understand, what words are to be allowed or forbidden to children of certain ages. They would like to decide, for the children, what type of illustration they like best, what colors and techniques are most suitable. They would love to have a "planned economy" of ideas so that all books would put across whatever propaganda they happened to feel at the moment was most worthy. Hitler, of course, has done the same thing long ago, but at least he was efficient.

Creative genius just does not work that way. It springs up and blooms in unexpected out-of-the-way places, in new and strange and beautiful forms. It is like the little Johnny-Jump-Ups in our garden that come up everywhere and bloom and live happily in the most unlikely places. Just try to collect them in a nice, well-fertilized, orderly bed! They turn yellow and die or seek a more congenial location in some baked gravel walk, or among the iris, any place where they can be free and unimproved and flower their best.

No planned economy could ordain that a farmhand on some dusty Montana ranch would write gusty and rollicking tales of the sea, or that a sickly boy in a slum might produce jewel-like masterpieces of draw-

ings, or that a staid secretary of the Bank of England would pen one of the most delicately imaginative books of all time.

Our first line of defense against this sort of benevolent regimentation is the good sense, the good taste and the honesty of our editors, our critics and our librarians. But the final and deciding factor lies in the sturdy independence of the children themselves. For they *do* know what they want and what they like and we might just as well throw the rest out of the window.

We can make all the speeches and write all the articles we please. We can point out the beauties of this and the values of that and the uplifting power of the other and receive in return only a cold and fishy stare. If we do not give them, in books, *real* warmth and beauty, *really* living characters, *really* robust humor, thrilling and fantastic imagination, they can simply shrug and look for them elsewhere. And they can find them elsewhere. Children can stage a sit-down strike or a policy of non-cooperation or passive resistance that would make Gandhi look like a fumbling amateur.

Our very title pages are forbidding. The present trend is to make the title page of every children's book look as nearly as possible like a rare collector's item. Perfect, chaste typography, perfect taste, perfect spacing—perfectly deadly. They have all the warmth and interest, for children, of a nice new memorial stone in Willowbrook Cemetery.

I can remember, we can all remember, title pages that were filled with warmth and interest. Some of them had "rustic" lettering, made of tree branches and roots. Gnomes and mice and beetles crawled through them. They were highly inartistic, they were in very bad taste, they were Mid-Victorian, they would never get a nod from Fifty Books of the Year—but children happened to love them. They were really

warm and filled with something to look at; they had definite personality.

We can all remember the beautiful, rich medieval intricacy of Howard Pyle's title pages. No one, even now, can question their artistic rightness, but they *did* take a lot of time and a lot of skill, and we haven't enough of either nowadays.

So the children go to the movies where they can find color and warmth, action and interest and thoroughly enjoy a little dose of bad taste. And then they have the newspaper strips to fall back on, and here again I can feel a great sympathy for Junior. At this point I would like to say a word in defense of the much misunderstood and maligned newspaper strip. Not that they need it, Heaven knows, they are doing very well for themselves. But at the risk of revealing myself as a moronic lowbrow I must confess that I have found a great deal of pleasure and interest in some of them, a great deal to admire and a great deal to envy.

Many people connected with children's books and many worried mothers have spoken to me of "those awful comic strips" as though they were a combination of leprosy and the opium habit. In every case I have asked if they have really looked at the newspaper strips in the last ten or fifteen years and in every case they have answered indignantly, "Of course not."

If they only would. If they would just study them for a while with the open eager mind of a child or a slightly childish adult. They would be very much surprised, very much relieved, and perhaps very much interested. They might even become, as I have, devoted admirers of that completely charming character, "Joe Palooka." For things have changed since the days of Happy Hooligan and Mutt and Jeff. They are not comic strips or "funnies" any more. Only a very few of them make any pre-

tense of being funny. They are mostly adventure serials.

They have *real* interest and suspense. Their characters have *real* and recognizable personality. They are highly moral. They cover fields that interest children. They deal with airplanes and tanks, ships, motor trucks and submarines. Their characters are cowboys and mountaineers, G men, international spies, office boys, ball players, prize fighters, soldiers and sailors. Their settings range from the Orient to the Arctic and to strange imaginative lands. Some of them are historical. There was one recently on highlights of American history and another on important inventions and the origins of great American industries. The research is thorough and correct; they were well drawn and well thought out. I do not know of any child's book that has presented American history half so absorbingly.

As for draughtsmanship, some of these features are amazing. I do not know of any one working for children's books, or for anything else for that matter, who can surpass, and very few who can equal, some of these men in technical dexterity. I do not think we can look down our noses at the newspaper strips. I am sure we cannot afford to just sit back and bemoan the fact that thousands and thousands of children have the bad taste to prefer them to our nice children's books. But we can, by a thorough and open-minded study of them, learn a great deal, a great deal that would help make our books more vital.

But We Can Help Them, Too

All this may sound like decrying the great strides that have been made in recent years in the quality of children's books, but it is not. I know how fine and how beautiful children's books are now. I know many of the people who have been responsible for raising their level. I know how hard and

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how sincerely they have worked to do it, and I have untold admiration for them and for the results of their devotion, for it is true devotion to a fine ideal.

But my great fear is lest we improve them too far. Lest we refine them to a point where their real vitals become attenuated. That we raise their level to a layer of the stratosphere where children cannot breathe. That in our absorption in achieving perfection we lose all touch with children who, after all, are pretty close to the earth and pretty real and pretty grubby. People have done this with plants, with religions, even with dogs. There was no animal in the world much finer than the old-fashioned, hard-working, intelligent collie dog. But earnest, sincere breeders have laboriously refined it and raised its level until it is now a most beautiful, streamlined, aristocratic useless nit-wit.

We must not do that with children's books.

We must not use children as guinea pigs for theories or as excuses for beautiful and unsalable editions. I would rather see a hundred thousand children writhing with glee over a small, dog-eared, cheaply printed book, than to have a hand in producing the most perfect specimen of the

publisher's art, with seventy-nine copies in circulation and four thousand in the warehouse. Those four thousand copies are not doing children any good; they're not doing anybody any good, except perhaps the mice.

The future outlook for children is pretty grim. They have a pitifully few carefree years ahead and I think we owe it to them to cram into those years everything we possibly can of beauty and joy and fantasy and thrill, regardless of the binding.

We must not give them just a splendid or an intriguing Juvenile List. We must give them Books. Books that will become tattered and grimy with use, not books too handsome to grovel with. Books that will make them weep, books that will rack them with hearty laughter. Books that absorb them so that they have to be shaken loose from them. Books that they will put under their pillows at night. Books that give them gooseflesh and glimpses of glory.

We must give them not what we think they ought to have, but *everything* we have to give, without restraint, with absolute frankness, and honesty and sincerity. *They* will do their own choosing, *they* will do their own selecting, and what they choose will be honest and of good repute.

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(Continued from page 267)

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Across the Editor's Desk

A Letter from Rose Fyleman

JANE JOSLIN of Towson Teachers College, Baltimore, Maryland, has shared with us a letter from Rose Fyleman, who is now living in Dorking, Surrey, since her "pretty flat in London was recently entirely demolished." We think Miss Fyleman's statement given below is of considerable social significance.

"... In order to write things that children will like you have to be a certain kind of person. If you aren't, it's no good trying. . . Methuen's is publishing my new book of rhymes. I think they are rather different from previous ones—more universal in character. This has come about because I have been in contact here with working class people's children who are rather different from what I call the nursery and mummy kind. I happen to have known more of that kind and was brought up that way. That is a gain in some ways. Working folk here have little time to attend to the imaginative needs of their children—the mothers are so busy.

"We are all very, very glad that America is now wide awake of what might have happened if she had gone on dozing. Even now it must be difficult for you to realize how much *everybody's* life has been altered by this tragic business."

If this present war makes us appreciate the people who live on the other side of the tracks as human beings like ourselves, it will not have been in vain.

Rosemary

HELEN BERTERMANN of Cincinnati, Ohio, contributes this anecdote. "Rosemary Anderson is a large doll which this year's eighth grade received from its first grade teacher. The "Anderson" is in honor of the first grade teacher. Rosemary was promoted each year with the class. She has a diary that has grown up with her. She has worn costumes of nearly every country and has been in many plays. This year she graduated. A girl who entered the class in the seventh grade bought her a graduation dress and hat. Another who came in just this year bought her white kid shoes. When I suggested that the class had enough money to pay for these things, the children were hurt and said that they had missed helping to take care of

her all these years, so would like to do something for her now. Rosemary received a diploma and sat on the stage with the class.

"The boys are as devoted to her as are the girls. They do not see a glimmer of fun about their devotion. When I took snapshots of the class the boys fairly fought to see who would hold Rosemary. When the girls went forward to sing at our last assembly, one of the boys picked up Rosemary and held her as you would a child. When some of the seventh grade boys teased him, he simply looked at them and said, 'What of it?' On the whole, this class is a sophisticated bunch, too."

Battered dolls and ragged slippers like sights and sounds and smells of long-ago and far-off places are often the only fragile strands that hold the warp and woof of life together. Touch not, hear not, speak not—except with tenderness.

The Diary of a Country Teacher

M. H. CONTINUES her diary begun in the November issue. She is a former teacher of first grade in a city system and is now teaching a one-room rural school.

November 7. Now that I understand my stove at school, I have had no more trouble with fires. It has not smoked since the one morning that I had so much trouble with it. The directors think that the chimney must have been clogged by a bird's nest. I think it may have been the nest of a bird or a squirrel that caused all the trouble.

November 10. The next P.T.A. meeting will be held in the classroom instead of the large vacant room upstairs. We have decided that the fire hazard is too large to risk having a crowd of people up there. The stove upstairs has a long pipe that goes through a closet before it enters the chimney. The closet is filled with an accumulation of boxes and boards. The one stairway that leads to this room is narrow and steep.

This change means less work for me. The children and I always do the cleaning after each meeting. We borrow chairs from the church hall. The boys always helped me get them and carry them up to the room. Then of course they had to be returned. I was so afraid someone might fall with the chairs.

November 13. Today we had our first fire drill at school. We have an enrollment of just twelve children, since one has moved to town, but I think we should have fire drills anyway. We have only one exit and the shingles are old and slightly curled.

November 14. We had vacation on Armistice Day. Two of the boys husked corn all day for their grandfather. He did not pay them anything because he had to transport them and they ate two big meals at his house. They husk corn after school, too. They are too tired to read in the evening. After supper they go right to bed.

November 17. This was a bad day for my ten-year-old Paul. His parents were both gone all day. He is the only child and during the noon hour one of his pigs rooted its way out of the pen and was at large. The ground is so soft it's easy for them to root. All the boys went to help Paul when he called for help. It was a misty day and the grass was very wet. They were ten minutes late for school that afternoon and they failed to get the pig back into the pen. They were all wet, tired and discouraged. I sent one home to change his clothes. Paul was so upset. I think he was afraid his folks might scold him; he may have been afraid I would scold them for being late. He wanted me to put all the tardy marks of the other boys on his report card. I did not call any of them tardy. They receive some kind of certificate of honor if they go a whole year without being tardy. I am not sure just what it is but the county superintendent sends them out. Paul cried and cried. He was quite sick for a while. I certainly did feel sorry for him. But the language he used was really quite shocking. I got out the Bible and looked for the ten commandments. I found them all right and I have them recite the fourth commandment every day.

November 18. The fly season is over now so I can clean the Venetian blinds and they will stay clean.

November 22. We have started having hot lunches at school. The children bring something such as soup or spaghetti and meat or vegetables in a pint fruit jar. I set their jars into a pan of water on my electric plate. By noon they are real hot. We use the hot water for washing. When the water was icy cold I could not get all the children to wash before they ate. Now that they have warm water they like to wash.

November 24. We are having some mice in our classroom. Every time we see a mouse it runs for the piano. It may have a nest there.

Sometimes I think the piano makes a peculiar sound when I play it. I must investigate.

November 28. We need books for our library. I am considering ways and means of earning some money. After the corn husking is over I expect we could have a box social.

November 29. The third issue of our school newspaper is off the press. The children have a great time collecting news and mimeographing the copies. We exchange papers with a school in Minnesota. Their paper is much nicer than ours. But ours will improve. M. H.

"Weekday Classes in Religious Education" **ETHEL L. SMITHER**, Editor of Children's Publications for the Board of Education of the Methodist

Church, has prepared this review of the bulletin, *Weekday Classes in Religious Education*, by Mary Dabney Davis, and published by the U. S. Office of Education. (It may be obtained from the Superintendent of Documents, Washington, D. C., for ten cents).

"The weekday school has received such attention from so many differing social agencies as well as from the church since 1935 that educators may well be grateful for this fact-finding survey of status and practices in weekday religious education in 1940. The study supplements a previous one made by Miss Davis in 1932.

"Replies to questionnaires sent to school administrators show four hundred eighty-eight school systems that release public school time of their pupils for weekday classes in religious education. Classes for the elementary school predominate. One hundred thirteen systems reported a discontinuance of the program and one hundred twenty-six that plans for weekday classes were under way—an estimated increase of nineteen percent since 1932. However, fifty-four per cent of the weekday schools now in existence were initiated between 1935-40 and the median for a school system to release time continuously is two years. Reports from forty-six states reported interest, provided the church initiated and supported an adequate program on a good standard. The chief question was whether or not the releasing of children for weekday instruction in religious education violated the constitutional provision for the separation of church and state.

"The inquiry surveys use of buildings for weekday classes; supervision, certification and employment of teachers; curriculum and major teaching techniques. Appendices furnish reports

of practices in certain systems and a bibliography of recent discussions of the weekday school of religious education.

"In the reviewer's opinion weekday classes for religious education might serve as demonstration centers and as practice classes for public school teachers. Thus they might gain the necessary knowledge and skill to achieve ethical and religious living without sectarian or theological emphasis in their classrooms. In time the weekday teacher of religious education might become counsellor to the children and teachers. A study of the 1940 survey seems to show that weekday classes in religious education in the United States are in general unable to render either of these services at present."

A Cooperative Nursery School Develops

THOSE OF YOU who are aware of the needs of children of nursery school age but have despaired of ever providing for them in your community will be encouraged by this report of the Stuyvesant Park Mothers' Association of New York City, contributed to CHILDHOOD EDUCATION by Mrs. Ted Allan, Nursery Campaign Director for the Association.

"The Association got its start last winter when four women who were spending every sunny morning watching their small children in Stuyvesant Park discovered that they all had the same problems—no healthy social life for their children (most of them were "onlies") and no freedom for themselves from the endless routine of child care which demands constant vigilance even when there is no washing, cooking, cleaning or bathing to be done. In other words, in this crowded, busy city, a mother and her child all too frequently are confined within a narrow apartment or seated on a park bench, isolated from all social and community life.

"These four mothers made a small dent in their problems by organizing a cooperative among themselves. Two mothers watched four children on alternate mornings, giving the other two an hour and a half to do some of the things they had so long been unable to do. By spring this small cooperative had grown from four to twenty mothers, had taken the name of the Stuyvesant Park Mothers' Association, was having regular meetings, and had planned a program of activity through which they hoped ultimately to establish a nursery school in the neighborhood and to undertake other projects

which might be necessary for the welfare of their children.

"The first project was to obtain a sandbox from the park authorities. Letters and petitions were prepared. We obtained the support of the Friends Society, the Children's Aid Society, and the Children's Shelter. P.M. carried an excellent story about us at the height of our efforts and finally the sandbox was installed.

"Now we are hard at work upon our major project—a nursery school. An investigation of the possibility of establishing a WPA nursery school revealed that WPA would supply the staff if we would obtain sponsors and a building. However, in this neighborhood there is a large number of families of the lower middle income group ineligible to WPA schools, (income over \$25 per week for family of one child) yet unable to afford the high tuition fees of the private schools. These children should not be denied the benefits of nursery school, and their mothers have much to offer our community life, particularly in defense activities. Therefore, what we want are WPA nursery schools admitting children of both low and lower middle income groups, or schools otherwise supported but maintaining a standard equal to that of WPA schools.

"Upon the advice of Elizabeth Hough, Secretary of the New York Nursery School Association, we are making a survey of the neighborhood to determine the numbers and types of nursery schools needed, as a basis from which to work if changes in WPA income restrictions cannot be made. The first step—obtaining signatures for a petition for a nursery school to indicate the available support—has been completed. The second step—conducting a poll of the entire territory—took place the week of November twenty-fourth, with the help of William Henderson, a statistician at Greenwich House and Assistant Director of Research at City College, and students from the departments of sociology of several universities. Following the poll, a campaign to educate the neighborhood in the values of nursery schools will be carried out. This campaign will include a mass meeting with speakers from representative groups interested in the education of young children."

Further information regarding plans and their progress may be obtained from Mrs. Allan, 315 E. 17th Street, New York City.

Books...

FOR TEACHERS

CHILDREN CAN SEE LIFE WHOLE: A Study of Some Progressive Schools in Action. By Mary Ross Hall. New York: The Association Press, 1940. Pp. vii + 157.

What concepts of the world do children have? Nowhere is the gap between purposes and practices glossed over so smoothly as in the field of education. Words come so readily to the writer of school syllabi and courses of education that the reader of most printed lists of goals of various schools is almost led to believe that the millennium has come.

Yet this lip-service to lofty ideals, this light-hearted assumption that most of our schools are planned to educate "the whole child," to develop an enlightened and integrated world citizen, has long needed scrutiny, even challenge. Specifically, by what exact steps are the schools trying to bring into the child's life the deeper experiences in spiritual and moral growth, in social responsibility, in building an integrated philosophy which most of them claim to the array of their meager emphases?

Such a scrutiny, and a most valuable one, has been conducted by Mrs. Hall, and the results published in a challenging book, *Children Can See Life Whole*. In this book the author presents the findings of her visits to eight different schools, each of which has been making efforts to help the child develop his capacity to "philosophize." In order to give focus to the presentation the writer selected two areas of the work of these schools. First, that of introducing the child to his universe, and second, of developing in the child a sense of social responsibility. Each of these schools was chosen because it came under the general heading, "progressive;" yet each is a different example of that main classification. Some are public, some private, some have privileged children, some underprivileged, some are new, some old, some urban, some suburban.

The writer spent from twelve days to several weeks in each of these schools. In inter-

viewing the teachers the following questions were included in each informal meeting:

What educational experiences do you feel are of the greatest importance for children of this age in this school?

What do you deliberately do to make these experiences possible?

What concept of the world can a child of this age have? How is it enlarged over that of the previous years?

What concepts of social responsibility can he have? How do you seek to build these up?

In interviewing the directors of these schools the following questions were kept in mind:

What are the principle interests and emphases of the school?

In what special ways do you try to realize them?

Are there any attitudes in the community which affect the school's work in orientation or in developing the pupil's sense of social responsibility?

Most of the book is a description of the actual activities of each school in operation. Toward the close, however, the author gives her critical estimates, grouping them under five headings. Two are summarized here:

Development of Sense of Responsibility. The author found great contrasts among schools as to whether they gave the children real responsibilities or a "type of dramatization of make-believe." Not only did she feel that some of the schools might give more genuine responsibilities, but that the scope of responsibilities should be extended into the community. "One of the greatest difficulties in the way of this type of education is that our way of life is so set up that we not only do not need the participation of individuals until they become full-grown wage earners, but they seem positively in the way; so that society seems to assure that they can live a life apart or at best play at life outside, until suddenly they are through with school and are expected by some miracle to be able to plunge at once into a feeling of respon-

sibility for doing their share of the community work and to carry that responsibility with skill."

Orientation in the Universe. Although in two of the schools a definite place in the schedule is made for the discussing of children's questions concerning life, its significance and development, and other problems essentially religious, in most of the schools there was little effort to deal with significant religious matters except in consideration of traditional Christian festivals. The author feels that the following aspects of life needed fuller and more frank handling by all schools:

a. The significance of man's dependence upon and control over natural resources and the need for responsible sharing.

b. The significance of man's dependence upon and control over social forces which work for good or ill, such as schools, hospitals, social welfare, housing, war, the exploitation of underprivileged groups.

c. Problems which man finds great difficulty in meeting yet which are inescapable, such as death, natural calamities, and the importance of developing inner resources with which to meet them.

On the whole the author's survey led her to believe that in planning for the spiritual side of their children's natures, most teachers overlook a great many possibilities because they feel inadequate to deal with "religious education." To such teachers Mrs. Hall would say, and the present reviewer heartily concurs: "if religion is seen to include man's age-long search for and devotion to the truest and finest in his world, certainly it should not be outside the province of the school to deal with that search and devotion openly and without self-consciousness." Children can see life whole, if the teacher will help them.—*Elizabeth Moore Manwell*, Syracuse, New York.

THROUGH CHILDREN'S EYES: True Stories out of the Practice of a Consulting Psychologist. By *Blanche C. Weill*. New York: *Island Workshop Press, Inc.*, 1940. Pp. xx + 365. \$2.75.

This is a book of great value. Not only does it help the reader to see the world through the eyes of some three dozen children, and to see these children as their parents see them, but the situations and their guidance suggestions are told in so interesting a fashion that they are likely to beguile and hold the inexperienced

as well as the trained reader, the sensitive as well as the scoffing parent.

The simplicity of the organization of the book is one source of its strength. In the opening pages the reader is asked: "Have you ever thought how the world appears to your children? It is different from ours. If you do not believe this, lie flat upon the floor and see how the world looks to the creeping baby. See how huge loom chair-legs and seats, the table a dark cloud in the sky. See how narrow the horizon is . . . Sit up and crouch low on your knees . . . door knobs are still hard to reach and windows show nothing but the sky. This is the three- or four-year-old view . . . see how people loom gigantic in stature and importance. They can seize you from your crib, swing you through the air, douse you in water. They can give: they can take away. You are powerless against their kindness or their ruthlessness."

Then there follow the descriptions of thirteen different situations which seemed intolerable to the children involved, so intolerable that they resorted to behavior to meet or escape them which puzzled or angered their parents and teachers, and they in turn consulted Dr. Weill. She examined each one, through test and interview, and then presents these children's accounts of their story as they told her or in some cases as they told the psychiatrist. Then she presents the parent's and teacher's versions of the same difficulty, frequently versions in startling contrast to those of the children. Thirdly, she presents in each case the way in which she was able to help the children and the adults to understand each other, and the result in the later behavior of the child.

One of the most stimulating aspects of this book is the wealth of suggestions for wholesome child guidance which it gives so simply and clearly. These children are not abnormal children but reveal the kinds of adult-child interrelationships which all of us meet weekly if not daily in our homes, with our own or our neighbors' children. Her suggestions, based on her own experience and her sympathetic understanding of children, are practical, positive and full of gentle discernment. No one can read this book without feeling more eager to understand a child in trouble, more willing to encourage parents to give full measure of love and security to children, more sensitive to the many causes for fear and sadness which most children have to undergo needlessly.—*Elizabeth Manwell*.

Books...

FOR CHILDREN

FAVORITE HYMNS. *Illustrated by Gustaf Tenggren. New York: Garden City Publishing Company, 1941. Pp. 42.*

Here is a collection of twenty-seven favorite hymns, with simplified piano arrangements. The illustrations are by Gustaf Tenggren in deep, glowing colors not unlike the colors of stained glass windows. The pictures are always dramatic but not always childlike. Most of them have, however, a deeply moving quality. The pictures may be ordered separately in two sets of five each, \$1.00 a set.

A CHILD'S BOOK OF PRAYERS. *Selected by Louise Raymond. Illustrated by Masha. New York: Random House, 1941. Unpaged. \$1.50.*

This book is so spectacularly lovely in format, illustrations, and colors that it will sell without benefit of reviews. The beauty of the end sheets and many of the illustrations fairly melt the heart, and it is perhaps capricious to say that others are a bit on the theatrical side.

In this day when we need to cultivate a deep and loving respect for the basic similarities in our differing religious creeds, this reviewer wishes there could have been included some prayers of Jewish and Catholic children. Nevertheless, this is a choice contribution from the Artists and Writers Guild, to our all too meager collection of religious books for children.

PADDLE-TO-THE-SEA. *By Holling Clancy Holling. Boston: Houghton Mifflin Company, 1941. Unpaged. \$2.00.*

Far to the North, in the Nipigon country, an Indian boy made a small canoe, carved the figure of an Indian kneeling on the bottom of the boat grasping the paddle, and on the underside of the canoe wrote, "Please put me back in the water. I am Paddle-to-the-Sea." Then he set the Paddle Person afloat in the spring freshets.

The Paddle Person travelled far and was often grounded but always some force or some person set him afloat again. Once he went over Niagara Falls. Once he was rescued from a wrecked freighter and given a new copper

rudder and a coat of waterproof ship's varnish. On the copper rudder people scratched the names of the waters and the ports that harbored him. He travelled to France and returned at last to the Nipigon country. There his creator greeted him, "Good Medicine Little Traveler! You are truly a Paddle Person; a Paddle-to-the-Sea!"

This book is good geography and good reading, too. The author's illustrations have a wild beauty that reinforce the fine text. This is a distinguished book to add to the reading experiences of children 9 to 12.

LOOPY. *By Hardie Gramatky. New York: G. P. Putnam and Sons, 1941. Unpaged. \$1.75.*

Little Toot, the tug boat, and *Hercules*, the fire engine, now have an exciting new brother, *Loopy*, the air plane. This is the best of Gramatky's priceless trilogy, both in pictures and text. Children 5 to 10 will revel in it, and all their relatives will offer to read it to them.

Loopy is a student plane and suffers much from bad handling but when the Show-Off gets him things become unbearable. Fortunately the Show-Off runs into a storm and has to bale out. Then, at last, Loopy is on his own. He is a wise airman and in spite of the temptation to frolic, goes home to fame and fortune with a perfect landing!

NOTHING AT ALL. *By Wanda Gág. New York: Coward-McCann, 1941. Unpaged. \$1.50.*

No one can do such delightful nonsensical sense for children 4 to 8 as Wanda Gág. Her fun has a way with it, both in pictures and in words!

Pointy and Curly were quite proper dogs and after they were adopted by two sympathetic children, their invisible brother ceased to enjoy being a Nothingy and yearned to be a Somethingy. Of course he succeeded and became little Something-after-all, a self-made dog with a happy life ahead.

Among . . .

THE MAGAZINES

RELIGIOUS EDUCATION, BUT NOT IN PUBLIC SCHOOLS. By G. George Fox. *Religious Education*, October - December, 1941, 36:212-219.

There are dangers to the welfare of the land. Numerous articles have been written that favor the teaching of religion during time released by the public schools. This article by Rabbi Fox presents powerful arguments opposing the practice. His reasons in brief are: Theological disputes help to prevent the harmony that is necessary for national defense, weekday religious education is not an integral part of life in the school or life in the church, release-time may result in coercion and social pressure, and the church should fulfill its teaching duties.

CHILDREN'S DRAWINGS AND THE WAR.

By Agatha H. Bowley. *The New Era in Home and School*, December 1941, 22:252-254.

Do children's drawings reflect the war? This article, by a psychologist in a guidance clinic in Dundee, England, contains encouragement. Two hundred twenty-two children from four to ten years old were asked to draw anything they liked. Only seventeen and one half per cent of the drawings showed any reference to the war, twenty-seven out of the thirty-nine including aeroplanes. About two per cent of the drawings apparently showed evidence of overt fear. The author concludes that we must be truthful with the child about the war but that we should keep alive his interest in peace-time pursuits.

CHANGING CONTENT IN ELEMENTARY SOCIAL STUDIES.

By Charles S. Turner.

Social Education, December 1941, 5:600-603.

Changes during twenty years. An analysis of 1207 courses of study from all sections of the U. S. showed that in the primary grades emphasis has decreased on the topics of holidays, primitive life, Eskimo life, hero stories, general geography, and local geography. The topics most frequently listed during the past five years are home and family life, community life, school life, transportation, food, clothing, and shelter.

There has been a marked trend away from the presentation of history and geography as separate subjects.

READING: A TOOL DESIGNED TO PROTECT DEMOCRATIC LIVING. By Roma Gans. *Progressive Education*, December 1941, 18:419-422.

The necessity for functional, critical reading. Even first-grade pupils find conflicting information and may be helped to appraise it. "From these examples, it is obvious that the broad, useful and critical type of reading described was an inherent part of a dynamic curriculum, one in which pupils dealt with problems within their scope of understanding and, through competent teacher guidance, were led to read widely and discerningly." Reading that is extensive and discerning is a protection to the individual and to the welfare of our democratic way of life.

VISITATION SHOULD FOLLOW WORKSHOPS. By Chester C. Carrothers. *Curriculum Journal*, December 1941, 12:365-367.

Are your workshop plans effective? Teachers who attended the workshop at Oklahoma A&M College were asked if they wished some type of follow-up visitation by a member of the workshop staff. Those who availed themselves of the opportunity seemed to profit greatly by the supervision. "If the education faculty . . . doesn't intend to get out into the field and to accept responsibility there for previous college instruction, it had best not meddle with the summer workshop idea. The thing is loaded!"

STARS TO STEER BY. By Alice Dalglish. *The Elementary English Review*, December 1941, 18:288-290.

How to give feelings of permanence, security, courage. The author believes that literature that gives the feeling of "it happened before" is important in these times. Fun, too, is necessary; poetry helps many; and we should become better acquainted with South America. Miss Dalglish recommends several books, old and new, for the various categories listed.

Research...

ABSTRACTS

FACTORS RELATED TO CHILDREN'S PARTICIPATION IN CERTAIN TYPES OF HOME ACTIVITY. By *Editha Luecke*. New York: Teachers College, Columbia University, *Contributions to Education*, No. 839, 1941. Pp. vii + 203.

A check list of 72 items was submitted to 600 boys and girls aged nine to twelve years, in the schools of Denton, Texas, a city of 10,000 people. The list included such items as the following: put your soiled clothes where they belong, mend your socks, make your bed, wash the dishes, dry the dishes, go to the store for groceries, bake hot cakes or waffles, help get a meal, get a meal for the family. The children were asked to check the items in the list which they performed at different times, such as on week-ends, school days, in vacation. They also indicated whether they performed each item usually, sometimes or never or rarely, and indicated whether they liked, disliked, or neither liked nor disliked each activity. The parents also furnished evidence of the performance by the children of the various activities. Extensive information on the education, economic status and other aspects of the several homes was secured.

Analysis of the data revealed that 80 per cent of the children engage in 60 per cent of the activities listed. Girls take part in 70 per cent and boys in 50 per cent. Both boys and girls engage most fully in the activities of personal regimen, next in those relating to housekeeping, and least in those related to preparing and cooking meals. They show more interest in the personal regimen activities than in the other two types. They dislike housekeeping most strongly, personal regimen next and meal preparation least. They express greater interest in all three types of activity, however, than they do dislike for them.

Boys engage in all three types of activity less than girls and express less interest in all three types. They reveal more dislike for housekeep-

ing and meal preparation. As girls grow older, they take more part in the various home activities, and show less dislike for them. Boys' participation does not increase with age, but their dislike is less at eleven and twelve than at nine and ten. Boys show greater interest in personal regimen after eleven.

Boys whose parents are at the middle of the educational scale show more interest and less dislike for home activities than do those whose parents are at the extremes of the scale. Girls' participation is influenced by the education of parents only in the case of meal preparation, the daughters of the highly educated parents being less interested in preparation of meals.

Boys of a low socio-economic level engage in home activities less than their more favored schoolmates, and show less interest in personal regimen. Position in relation to siblings is comparatively unimportant in the participation of children in home activities.

The author believes that the school can profitably cooperate with the home in building proper attitudes, habits, skills, and knowledge that will make boys and girls more effective and cooperative members of their home groups. She suggests that the information presented in her study will help the school to accomplish this aim more adequately.

SOCIAL INFLUENCES AFFECTING THE BEHAVIOR OF YOUNG CHILDREN. By *Ruth Pearson Koshuk*. Washington: National Research Council; *Monographs of the Society for Research in Child Development*. Vol. VI, No. 2. Pp. iii + 71.

The author states her purpose as follows: "to place in reasonable perspective the significant research publications since 1925 dealing specifically with the influence of social factors, broadly defined, on the behavior of young children." In fifty pages of text, she indicates the nature of hundreds of investigations and quotes from or paraphrases their more important conclusions or viewpoints and emphases. Twenty-

one pages are devoted to listing a bibliography of 525 items. The studies are classified as to type, and for many of them the research methods utilized are indicated.

No summary can begin to suggest the wealth of conclusions and unsolved problems indicated in this report. The author does, however, present a brief recapitulation of certain trends and foci of interest. She lists a number of key concepts, including such terms as: total personality, functionally significant whole situations, cultural differentials, interaction, conflict, integrative vs. dominative behavior, attitude therapy, play therapy, maternal rejection and overprotection. She finds evidence that the nature-nurture controversy has become interested in the early months of life and that it is gradually becoming a concerted effort to reveal the processes of interaction between innate growth factors and the powerful influences of the environment within which each child matures.

The studies reviewed reveal major trends as follows: away from exclusive concern with such factors as age, race, nationality, and sex: toward greater recognition of the fact that behavior always occurs in a social and cultural setting, with the tendency to analyze such settings in relation to the observed behavior; toward comparative investigations of personality develop-

ment in different cultures; toward long-term comprehensive investigations involving control groups; toward experiments in the modification of social behavior; and toward systematic attempts to devise indirect methods of discovering the inner, personal organization of experience and the meaning of human relationships. She notes an increase in the reliability of techniques of sampling and of assembling data and more refined methods of statistical analysis.

"It seems fairly well established," says the author, "that no one item of the socio-cultural background is highly correlated with child adjustment, but that it is the constellation of items which counts—the family 'atmosphere'—and that within this complex the marital adjustment between the parents has the greatest weight, of the factors studied." She notes an increasing degree of understanding and appreciation of the work of others among various specialists. Psychiatrists more and more recognize the influence of cultural factors. Conversely, psychologists and sociologists see new promise in recent methods of objectifying the person's inner world of fantasy. Cultural anthropologists make their contribution with rounded accounts of development within different cultures, and their methods are now being used to trace the cultural factors operating in our own society.

A.C.E. Convention News

Program plans for the Golden Jubilee Convention of the Association for Childhood Education which is to be held at Buffalo, New York, April 6-10, 1942, are rapidly nearing completion. The five evening sessions promise to be unique and stimulating. James S. Plant, Director, Essex County (New Jersey) Juvenile Clinic, will speak on the opening night. The Tuesday evening program is in charge of Frances Tredick and will be a "Then and Now" celebration of the Association's Fiftieth Anniversary. Burton Fowler, Headmaster of Germantown Friends School, is the Wednesday night speaker and will discuss how coordinating and strengthening our efforts for children can be done on a community basis. The Golden Jubilee Dinner is on Thursday night with Olga Adams as chairman. The Friday night program which closes the convention will give consideration to young children in the present emergency.

Three primary and three kindergarten interest

groups will discuss the following subjects on Thursday afternoon, April 9:

Primary Science—Leader: Lawrence Palmer

Social Studies—Leader: Jennie Wahlert

Reading—Leader: Merle Gray

Kindergarten Records — Leader: Lorraine Benner

Music—Leader: Emma Sheehy

Play—Leader: Olga Adams

Programs of the nursery and middle school groups will be announced later.

May Hill Arbuthnot will speak at the luncheon general session which will be held on Wednesday. Always a popular activity, the studio groups will again be in full swing with Ruth Hargitt, Elementary Supervisor at Cincinnati, and Dorothy Gradolf, Cincinnati, as director and co-director. Studios of fine arts, industrial arts, music, dancing, choral speaking, creative writing, storytelling and using what we have give promise of never a dull moment.

We hope to meet you at Buffalo.

News...

HERE AND THERE

New A.C.E. Branches

Los Angeles Association for Early Childhood Education, California
 San Jose Association for Childhood Education, California
 Hardin County Association for Childhood Education, Georgia
 Madison County Association for Childhood Education, Georgia
 East St. Louis Association for Childhood Education, Illinois
 New Orleans Association for Childhood Education, Louisiana
 Havre Association for Childhood Education, Montana
 Albemarle Association for Childhood Education, North Carolina
 Franklin County Association for Childhood Education, Ohio
 Durant Association for Childhood Education, Oklahoma
 Mansfield State Teachers College Association for Childhood Education, Pennsylvania
 Elementary Club, West Chester State Teachers College, Pennsylvania
 Blount County Association for Childhood Education, Tennessee
 Coffee County Association for Childhood Education, Tennessee
 Jefferson County Association for Childhood Education, Tennessee
 Texas Christian University Association for Childhood Education, Fort Worth, Texas

The 34 new and three reinstated Branches for the year bring the total of A.C.E. affiliated Branches to 491.

Charter Member Branches

Fifty years ago the International Kindergarten Union, parent organization of the Association for Childhood Education, had nine Branches which had affiliated during its first year, 1892-93. They were:

St. Louis Froebel Society, Missouri
 Buffalo Kindergarten Union, New York
 Toledo Froebel Society, Ohio
 Golden Gate Kindergarten Association, San Francisco, California
 Philadelphia Branch, Pennsylvania
 Chicago Kindergarten Club, Illinois
 Froebel Society of Rhode Island
 Albany Kindergarten Association, New York
 Cleveland Kindergarten Union, Ohio

Anniversary Gifts

"Not gifts of money but gifts of service," said Verna Chrisler, A.C.E. Fellow for 1941-42. A number of suggestions had been made that A.C.E. Branches give to their national Association during its 50th Anniversary year gifts of money with which to extend its services. The members of the Executive Board were reluctant to ask Branches to contribute in this way and sought Miss Chrisler's reaction as representative of the Branches at Headquarters office.

There are many tangible services that Branches can contribute, such as aiding the formation of new Branches, increasing the use of CHILDHOOD EDUCATION, sending delegates to the Golden Jubilee Convention, and working on special legislation for the education and welfare of children. There are the intangibles, such as self-sacrifice, cooperative work, sincerity, the practice of kindly thinking and doing.

The A.C.E. Executive Board agreed that in 1942 Branches should be invited not only to continue and increase these services to the national Association but to expand their fields of endeavor for all service to all children as speedily and effectively as possible. Definite ways for Branches to do this, beginning with increased services to children in their own communities, were outlined in the January issue of the *Branch Exchange*.

A.C.E. Publications

The first Membership Service Bulletin for 1942, *Storytelling*, has been mailed to contributing members of the national Association and to presidents, secretaries and publication representatives of Branches. In this 36-page Golden Jubilee bulletin will be found the how, when and where of storytelling, its history, its contribution to the child's inner life, and a bibliography of stories and poems. Those who do not receive it as a membership service may purchase the bulletin from A.C.E. Headquarters, 1201 Sixteenth Street, N.W., Washington, D. C. Price 35c.

The leaflet for parents and teachers, *Toys-*



"With the new Basic Readers the children—all of them—even the slow learning ones—are reading with understanding and fluency."

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What-When, was for a time out of print but when orders continued to come it was reprinted and is available again from A.C.E. Headquarters. Price 15c.

Because of the special problems manufacturers and distributors are having to meet this year in production and delivery, it was decided that the A.C.E. bulletin, *Equipment and Supplies*, should not receive its usual annual revision in 1942. When the decision was announced to manufacturers and distributors listed in the bulletin, replies to the letter were unanimous in their approval. *Equipment and Supplies* will be reprinted and may be purchased from A.C.E. Headquarters. Price 50c.

A Correction

The name of Lucy Gage, Peabody College, Nashville, Tennessee, was, through error, omitted from the Advisory Committee membership list on page 32 of the 1941 A.C.E. Yearbook. Members of this committee are appointed for life and Miss Gage continues a valued member of a group that has served the Association faithfully through the years.

Wheelock Changes Name

In 1939 Wheelock School observed its fiftieth year of training young women for nursery school, kindergarten and primary teaching. The following year Winifred E. Bain became principal and the course of study was expanded from three to four years. Now comes the announcement that a charter has been granted to change the name to Wheelock College and to award to graduating students the degree of Bachelor of Science in Education. Lucy Wheelock, founder of the school and guide to its students for fifty-two years, may well be proud of her own accomplishments and those of the many teachers all over the country who studied and worked with her.

Excursion and Study Group Day

Eight study groups and an excursion were offered members of the Chicago Area A.C.E. on November 1. A few of these activities are reported here.

Independent Work Period. The meeting opened with a discussion of the philosophy of the independent work period. The difference was brought out between this type of period and "seat work" or "busy work." Opportunities within it for self-directed activity, for creative work, as well as supplementary class work were discussed. The need for a thoughtfully planned physical setup and for a variety of materials was emphasized.

(Continued on page 286)

D. C. Heath and Company announces

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A SERIES OF BASAL READERS



BIGGER AND BIGGER

By INEZ HOGAN
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By ROMNEY GAY
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By ARDRA SOULE WAVLE
*Educational Consultant, ETHEL MABIE FALK**

SOMETHING DIFFERENT

By EVA KNOX EVANS
*Educational Consultant, ETTA ROSE BAILEY**

LOST AND FOUND

By ROBIN PALMER
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BARBARA NOLEN, *Editor*
*Educational Consultant, FLORENCE BRUMBAUGH**

LUCK AND PLUCK

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GRADES I-VI

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Following the discussion three teachers told in some detail of their room setups, their materials, and their successes and problems with this type of period. After this the group made a careful study of an exhibit of materials.

Current Literature: Children's and Professional. An excellent group of children's books from the picture book age to junior high school were exhibited. A few professional books, and some of the latest non-fiction for adults were also displayed. Brief reviews of many of the books were given with emphasis on the new books about Americanism and democracy for children. Each person was given a list of the new books with a brief resume of each and its cost.

These suggestions were made: that one of the best places to learn of new books is CHILDHOOD EDUCATION; that some of the liveliest material for professional perusal may be found in the National Education Association yearbooks; that books on democracy and constructive proposals for democracy by Adamic, Dale, and the Educational Policies Commission are recommended.

Children's Questions Relating to Religion. The group included several parents, a principal, Sunday school teachers, college instructors, and teachers in nursery and elementary schools. The leader called attention to evidences of a revival of interest in religion and religious education. Reviews were given of scientific studies now in progress in this field and of efforts in various school systems looking toward religious instruction of children.

Definitions of religion as a way of life were cited. A broad interpretation was emphasized rather than the pattern of a particular creed or church. This was stressed as fundamental in the guidance of young children.

Creative Expression With Materials. Long before the class convened people gathered around tables which held materials for making such intriguing things as necklaces, bracelets, belts, mittens, buttons, lapel pins, trays, hat stands and vases. The techniques by which a wide range of materials might be made into interesting and attractive articles were presented. The present scarcity of many products had challenged teachers to cast about in unusual places for craft materials; the variety presented for use ranged from candle drippings, tin cans, cork and macaroni to black walnuts, plastic, and old newspaper.

A group of college students stayed throughout the day explaining, aiding and participating. Their enthusiasm added much sparkle to the enterprise.

In the afternoon additional exclamations of interest filled the air over a roomful of lovely things made by children in the elementary schools of Cicero.

Animals—including a life-sized young elephant—dolls, hot-pads, Christmas tree ornaments, book covers and myriads of other Christmas suggestions were available. Each guest worked out some practical idea for Christmas.

Reading Interests and Needs of Children. In this study group initial discussion centered on the need for the teacher to know her individual children and books appropriate to their interests, as well as to provide many opportunities for reading. This was considered essential in creating a desire to read and in developing readiness for reading in individual children whatever their age or grade.

In relation to needs it was thought that reading

readiness must be interpreted much more broadly than it often is, not as something to be taught through formal exercise but rather developed through wide variety of experience; that certain mechanics of reading and word recognition techniques need to be taught all children but some will need more of this than others; that there is a trend toward a balance in oral and silent reading experiences.

Excursion. An excursion was taken along six blocks of the river front and to the Board of Education Radio Council Headquarters. The purpose of this activity was to show what made an excursion a learning experience. The extensive preparation by the leader was evidenced and evaluated. This included covering the ground before the excursion was made by the group, selecting printed matter of related interest, making arrangements with all people concerned, and scheduling time appropriately.

How such an experience as this group had could be adapted to a teaching situation at any level with equal success was discussed at the luncheon meeting following the trip.

Young Children and Defense

Recognizing the fact that although innumerable agencies and defense councils were under way to help in the present emergency there was no single agency that would make the care and safeguarding of young children its first concern, the National Association for Nursery Education, at its biennial meeting in October, created the National Commission for Young Children. Ten educators were appointed by the N.A.N.E. as members of the commission. Rose Alschuler, N.A.N.E. vice-president, serves as chairman, giving her entire time to this activity. At the present time Mrs. Alschuler is carrying on her work from a desk in the Office of Civilian Defense in Washington, D. C.

Among the organizations cooperating with the National Commission for Young Children are the American Association of University Women, the Progressive Education Association, and the Association for Childhood Education.

Wartime Commission Established

Only a few days after the United States entered the World War educational organizations were called into conference by the U. S. Office of Education. The meeting on December 23 was addressed by Paul V. McNutt, Federal Security Administrator:

Schools, colleges, libraries are the keys to America's mind, and the time has come to create the wartime machinery to hasten an adjustment upon which our national life depends. What can educational agencies—public and private—do to hasten victory?

That is part of the responsibility of the Federal Security Agency and its Office of Education. That is part of my responsibility as Director of Defense Health and Welfare Services, among which education ranks high. Accordingly I have requested the U. S. Com-

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The school boards, school executives and school teachers of every school in this country have the duty of seeing that this all-important fact is not lost sight of, in the trying years ahead.

Let every one of us devote our every effort towards the rapid, successful conclusion of the present conflict.

But let none of us handicap our country's chances for speedy post-war reconstruction, by any restriction of the educational facilities provided for our children. For these children will need every advantage we can give them now, to efficiently perform the vital work they will be called upon to do tomorrow.

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missioner of Education to effect such an organization in connection with his office as will make possible the most direct and workable contacts with government agencies on the one hand, the educational institutions and organizations on the other. The object is to facilitate the adjustment of educational agencies to war needs, to inform the government agencies directly responsible for the war effort concerning the services schools and colleges can render, and to determine the possible effects upon schools and colleges of proposed policies and programs of these government agencies.

In announcing the resulting commission, John W. Studebaker, U. S. Commissioner of Education, said:

To be of the largest possible service to the government in general, to a number of agencies of the government in particular, and to organized education throughout the nation, the Office of Education now needs and requests the united assistance of a workable group of key officials in or near Washington engaged in different fields of education. Acting upon Administrator McNutt's request I am, therefore, establishing the Office of Education Wartime Commission.

The establishment and operation of this commission will in no way impede, but rather will facilitate, the continuing operation of existing educational organizations and committees. It is my earnest hope that the autonomy and effectiveness of the organizations represented in this united commission will be preserved. It is believed that through the work of this commission schools, colleges and libraries will be able to render even greater service to the nation at this time of crisis. The people of the country have a right to expect this united effort by the government and organized education.

The Association for Childhood Education is represented on this commission of 33 members.

Inter-American Educational Relations

John W. Studebaker, U. S. Commissioner of Education, has established a Division of Inter-American Educational Relations, headed by John C. Patterson, in the U. S. Office of Education. Activities will include:

Exchange of professors, teachers and students between the United States and other American republics, in cooperation with the Department of State.

Preparation and distribution of materials in the inter-American field.

Lending of materials on Latin America through the Information Exchange on Education and Defense.

Evaluation of credits and other assistance to students from schools and universities in the other republics by the Division of Comparative Education.

Exhibits of teaching materials—books, maps, films, handicrafts, pictures—in the Inter-American field are also prepared by the Library Service Division.

The U. S. Office of Education program also calls for the development of demonstration centers in inter-American education in a number of schools and colleges throughout the country.

Pan American Day

Pan American Day is observed on April of each year to commemorate the political, economic and spiritual unity of the twenty-American republics. The Pan American Union of Washington, D. C., has prepared and is distributing lists of materials which will be made available to schools, clubs, civic associations and other study groups. Copies of the materials will be sent only to teachers and groups and not to individual students.

It is suggested by the Union that individuals or groups planning Pan American Day programs consult their local public or school libraries for material prepared in previous years and that material used this year be deposited in such libraries for possible future use.

Meeting of Elementary Principals

Some four hundred people are expected to gather on the campus of the University of Colorado at Boulder during the two weeks beginning July 6, for the 1942 summer conference of the Department of Elementary School Principals of the National Education Association. Arrangements are also being made for an unusual recreational program in the Rocky Mountain National Park so that registrants may enjoy the snow-capped peaks, the mining communities and the old ghost towns of Colorado.

National Council of Childhood Education

The sessions of this Council, held each February, are planned by the presidents of two organizations, the National Association for Nursery Education and the Association for Childhood Education. This year they will take place at the Clift Hotel in San Francisco, California, on Wednesday, February 25.

At the morning session William G. Carter, Educational Policies Commission, National Education Association, will address the group on some phase of the education and welfare of young children in a democracy. In the afternoon representatives of agencies working for young children will discuss how a community can best serve its young children in the emergency. Between the two sessions an informal luncheon served in the Roof Lounge of the Clift Hotel will offer opportunity to meet and talk with friends.

Not only those working directly with children but administrators and others who may plan for their care and welfare are cordially invited to attend these meetings.